

# OF HOLY VIRGINITY

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

DE VIRGINITATE.

TRANSLATED BY REV. C. I. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Retr. ii. 23. “After I had written on the Good of Marriage,’ it was expected that I should write on Holy Virginity; and I did not delay to do so: and that it is God’s gift, and how great a gift, and with what humility to be guarded, so far as I was able I set forth in one volume. This book begins,” &c.

1. We lately put forth a book “of the Good of Marriage,” in which also we admonished and admonish the virgins of Christ, not, on account of that greater gift which they have received, to despise, in comparison of themselves, the fathers and mothers of the People of God; and not to think those men, (whom the Apostle sets forth as the olive, that the engrafted wild olive be not proud,) who did service to Christ about to come hereafter, even by the begetting of sons, on this account of less desert, because by divine right continence is preferred to wedded life, and pious virginity to marriage. Forsooth in them were being prepared and brought forth future things, which now we see fulfilled in a marvellous and effectual manner, whose married life also was prophetic: whence, not after the wonted custom of human wishes and joys, but by the very deep counsel of God, in certain of them fruitfulness obtained to be honored, in certain also barrenness to be made fruitful. But at this time, towards them unto whom it is said, “if they contain not, let them be married,” we must use not consolation, but exhortation. But them, unto whom it is said, “Whoso can receive, let him receive,” we must exhort, that they be not alarmed; and alarm that they be

not lifted up. Wherefore virginity is not only to be set forth, that it may be loved, but also to be admonished, that it be not puffed up.

2. This we have undertaken in our present discourse: may Christ help us, the Son of a virgin, and the Spouse of virgins, born after the flesh of a virgin womb, and wedded after the Spirit in virgin marriage. Whereas, therefore, the whole Church itself is a virgin espoused unto one Husband Christ, as the Apostle saith, of how great honor are its members worthy, who guard this even in the flesh itself, which the whole Church guards in the faith? which imitates the mother of her husband, and her Lord. For the Church also is both a mother and a virgin. For whose virgin purity consult we for, if she is not a virgin? or whose children address we, if she is not a mother? Mary bare the Head of This Body after the flesh, the Church bears the members of that Body after the Spirit. In both virginity hinders not fruitfulness: in both fruitfulness takes not away virginity. Wherefore, whereas the whole Church is holy both in body and spirit, and yet the whole is not virgin in body but in spirit; how much more holy is it in these members, wherein it is virgin both in body and spirit?

3. It is written in the Gospel, of the mother and brethren of Christ, that is, His kindred after the flesh, that, when word had been brought to Him, and they were standing without, because they could not come to Him by reason of the crowd, He made answer, “Who is My mother? or who are My brethren? and stretching forth His Hand over His disciples, He saith, These are My brethren: and whosoever shall have done the will of My Father, that man is to Me brother, and mother, and sister.” What else teaching us, than to prefer to kindred after the flesh, our descent after the Spirit: and that men are not blessed for this reason, that they are united by nearness of flesh unto just and holy men, but that, by obeying and following, they cleave unto their doctrine and conduct. Therefore Mary is more blessed in receiving the faith of Christ, than in conceiving the flesh of Christ. For to a certain one who said, “Blessed is the womb, which bare Thee,” He Himself made answer, “Yea, rather, blessed are they who hear the Word of God, and keep it.” Lastly, to His brethren, that is, His kindred after the flesh, who believed not in Him, what profit was there in that being of kin? Thus also her

nearness as a Mother would have been of no profit to Mary, had she not borne Christ in her heart after a more blessed manner than in her flesh.

4. Her virginity also itself was on this account more pleasing and accepted, in that it was not that Christ being conceived in her, rescued it beforehand from a husband who would violate it, Himself to preserve it; but, before He was conceived, chose it, already dedicated to God, as that from which to be born. This is shown by the words which Mary spake in answer to the Angel announcing to her her conception; “How,” saith she, “shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” Which assuredly she would not say, unless she had before vowed herself unto God as a virgin. But, because the habits of the Israelites as yet refused this, she was espoused to a just man, who would not take from her by violence, but rather guard against violent persons, what she had already vowed. Although, even if she had said this only, “How shall this take place?” and had not added, “seeing I know not a man,” certainly she would not have asked, how, being a female, she should give birth to her promised Son, if she had married with purpose of sexual intercourse. She might have been bidden also to continue a virgin, that in her by fitting miracle the Son of God should receive the form of a servant, but, being to be a pattern to holy virgins, lest it should be thought that she alone needed to be a virgin, who had obtained to conceive a child even without sexual intercourse, she dedicated her virginity to God, when as yet she knew not what she should conceive, in order that the imitation of a heavenly life in an earthly and mortal body should take place of vow, not of command; through love of choosing, not through necessity of doing service. Thus Christ by being born of a virgin, who, before she knew Who was to be born of her, had determined to continue a virgin, chose rather to approve, than to command, holy virginity. And thus, even in the female herself, in whom He took the form of a servant, He willed that virginity should be free.

5. There is, therefore, no reason why the virgins of God be sad, because themselves also cannot, keeping their virginity, be mothers of the flesh. For Him alone could virginity give birth to with fitting propriety, Who in His Birth could have no peer. However, That Birth of the Holy Virgin is the ornament of all holy virgins; and themselves together with Mary are mothers of Christ, if they do the will of His Father. For Mary also is on this

account the Mother of Christ in a way more full of praise and blessing, according to His sentence mentioned above. “Whosoever doeth the will of my Father Who is in heaven, that one is to Me brother, and sister, and mother.” All these degrees of nearness of kin to Himself, He shows forth in a spiritual manner, in the People whom He hath redeemed: as brothers and sisters He hath holy men and holy women, forasmuch as they all are co-heirs in the heavenly inheritance. His mother is the whole Church, because she herself assuredly gives birth to His members, that is, His faithful ones. Also His mother is every pious soul, doing the will of His Father with most fruitful charity, in them of whom it travaileth, until Himself be formed in them. Mary, therefore, doing the will of God, after the flesh, is only the mother of Christ, but after the Spirit she is both His sister and mother.

6. And on this account, that one female, not only in the Spirit, but also in the flesh, is both a mother and a virgin. And a mother indeed in the Spirit, not of our Head, Which is the Saviour Himself, of Whom rather she was born after the Spirit: forasmuch as all, who have believed in Him, among whom is herself also, are rightly called “children of the Bridegroom:” but clearly the mother of His members, which are we: in that she wrought together by charity, that faithful ones should be born in the Church, who are members of That Head: but in the flesh, the mother of the Head Himself. For it behoved that our Head, on account of a notable miracle, should be born after the flesh of a virgin, that He might thereby signify that His members would be born after the Spirit, of the Church a virgin: therefore Mary alone both in Spirit and in flesh is a mother and a virgin: both the mother of Christ, and a virgin of Christ; but the Church, in the Saints who shall possess the kingdom of God, in the Spirit indeed is altogether the mother of Christ, altogether a virgin of Christ: but in the flesh not altogether, but in certain a virgin of Christ, in certain a mother, but not of Christ. Forsooth both faithful women who are married, and virgins dedicated to God, by holy manners, and charity out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeigned, because they do the will of the Father, are after a spiritual sense mothers of Christ. But they who in married life give birth to (children) after the flesh, give birth not to Christ, but to Adam, and therefore run, that their offspring having been dyed in His

Sacraments, may become members of Christ, forasmuch as they know what they have given birth to.

7. I have said this, lest haply married fruitfulness dare to vie with virgin chastity, and to set forth Mary herself, and to say unto the virgins of God, She had in her flesh two things worthy of honor, virginity and fruitfulness; inasmuch as she both continued a virgin, and bore: this happiness, since we could not both have the whole, we have divided, that ye be virgins, we be mothers: for what is wanting to you in children, let your virginity, that hath been preserved, be a consolation: for us, let the gain of children make up for our lost virginity. This speech of faithful women married, unto holy virgins, would any how be to be endured, if they gave birth to Christians in the flesh; that in this alone, save virginity, the fruitfulness of Mary in the flesh should be more excellent, that she gave birth to the Head Himself of these members, but they to the members of That Head: but now, although by this speech there vie such as on this one account wed and have intercourse with husbands, that they may have sons, and have no other thought of their sons, than to gain them for Christ, and do this so soon as they can: yet are not Christians born of their flesh, but made so afterwards: the Church giving them birth, through this, that in a spiritual manner she is the mother of the members of Christ, of Whom also after a spiritual manner she is the virgin. And unto this holy birth mothers also who have not borne in the flesh Christians, are workers together, that they may become what they know that they could not give birth to in the flesh: yet are they workers together through this, wherein themselves also are virgins and mothers of Christ, that is to say, in “faith which worketh through love.”

8. Therefore no fruitfulness of the flesh can be compared to holy virginity even of the flesh. For neither is itself also honored because it is virginity, but because it hath been dedicated to God, and, although it be kept in the flesh, yet is it kept by religion and devotion of the Spirit. And by this means even virginity of body is spiritual, which continence of piety vows and keeps. For, even as no one makes an immodest use of the body, unless the sin have been before conceived in the spirit, so no one keeps modesty in the body, unless chastity have been before implanted in the spirit. But, further, if modesty of married life, although it be guarded in the flesh, is yet

attributed to the soul, not to the flesh, under the rule and guidance of which, the flesh itself hath no intercourse with any beside its own proper estate of marriage; how much more, and with how much greater honor, are we to reckon among the goods of the soul that continence, whereby the virgin purity of the flesh is vowed, consecrated, and kept, for the Creator Himself of the soul and flesh.

9. Wherefore neither are we to believe that their fruitfulness of the flesh, who at this time seek in marriage nothing else save children, to make over unto Christ, can be set against the loss of virginity. Forsooth, in former times, unto Christ about to come after the flesh, the race itself of the flesh was needful, in a certain large and prophetic nation: but now, when from out every race of men, and from out all nations, members of Christ may be gathered unto the People of God, and City of the kingdom of heaven, whoso can receive sacred virginity, let him receive it; and let her only, who contains not, be married. For what, if any rich woman were to expend much money on this good work, and to buy, from out different nations, slaves to make Christians, will she not provide for the giving birth to members of Christ in a manner more rich, and more numerous, than by any, how great soever, fruitfulness of the womb? And yet she will not therefore dare to compare her money to the offering of holy virginity. But if for the sake of making such as shall be born Christians, fruitfulness of the flesh shall with just reason be set against the loss of chastity, this matter will be more fruitful, if virginity be lost at a great price of money, whereby many more children may be purchased to be made Christians, than could be born from the womb, however fruitful, of a single person. But, if it be extreme folly to say this, let the faithful women that are married possess their own good, of which we have treated, so far as seemed fit, in another volume; and let them more highly honor, even as they are most rightly used to do, in the sacred virgins, their better good, of which we are treating in our present discourse.

10. For not even herein ought such as are married to compare themselves with the deserts of the continent, in that of them virgins are born: for this is not a good of marriage, but of nature: which was so ordered of God, as that of every sexual intercourse whatever of the two sexes of human kind, whether in due order and honest, or base and unlawful, there is born no

female save a virgin, yet is none born a sacred virgin: so it is brought to pass that a virgin is born even of fornication, but a sacred virgin not even of marriage.

11. Nor do we ourselves set forth this in virgins, that they are virgins; but that they are virgins dedicated unto God by pious continence. For it is not at a venture that I may say, a married woman seems to me happier than a virgin about to be married: for the one hath what the other as yet desires, especially if she be not yet even the betrothed of any one. The one studies to please one, unto whom she hath been given; the other many, in doubt unto whom she is to be given: by this one thing she guards modesty of thought from the crowd, that she is seeking, not an adulterer, but a husband, in the crowd. Therefore that virgin is with good reason set before a married woman, who neither sets herself forth for the multitude to love, whereas she seeks from out the multitude the love of one; nor, having now found him, orders herself for one, taking thought of the things of the world, “how to please her husband;” but hath so loved “Him of fair beauty above the sons of men,” as that, because she could not, even as Mary, conceive Him in her flesh, she hath kept her flesh also virgin for Him conceived in her heart. This kind of virgins no fruitfulness of the body hath given birth to: this is no progeny of flesh and blood. If of these the mother be sought for, it is the Church. None bears sacred virgins save a sacred virgin, she who hath been espoused to be presented chaste unto one Husband, Christ. Of her, not altogether in body, but altogether in spirit virgin, are born holy virgins both in body and in spirit.

12. Let marriages possess their own good, not that they beget sons, but that honestly, that lawfully, that modestly, that in a spirit of fellowship they beget them, and educate them, after they have been begotten, with cooperation, with wholesome teaching, and earnest purpose: in that they keep the faith of the couch one with another; in that they violate not the sacrament of wedlock. All these, however, are offices of human duty: but virginal chastity and freedom through pious continence from all sexual intercourse is the portion of Angels, and a practice, in corruptible flesh, of perpetual incorruption. To this let all fruitfulness of the flesh yield, all chastity of married life; the one is not in (man’s) power, the other is not in

eternity; free choice hath not fruitfulness of the flesh, heaven hath not chastity of married life. Assuredly they will have something great beyond others in that common immortality, who have something already not of the flesh in the flesh.

13. Whence they are marvellously void of wisdom, who think that the good of this continence is not necessary for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, but for the sake of the present world: in that, forsooth, married persons are strained different ways by earthly cares more and more straitened, from which trouble virgins and continent persons are free: as though on this account only it were better not to be married, that the straits of this present time may be escaped, not that it is of any profit unto a future life. And, that they may not seem to have put forth this vain opinion from out the vanity of their own heart, they take the Apostle to witness, where he saith, “But concerning virgins I have not command of the Lord, but I give counsel, as having obtained mercy from God to be faithful. Therefore I think that this is good on account of the present necessity, because it is good for a man so to be.” Lo, say they, where the Apostle shows “that this is good on account of the present necessity,” not on account of the future eternity. As though the Apostle would have regard for the present necessity, otherwise than as providing and consulting for the future; whereas all his dealing calls not save unto life eternal.

14. It is, therefore, the present necessity that we are to avoid, but yet such as is a hindrance to somewhat of the good things to come; by which necessity the married life is forced to have thought of the things of the world, how to please, the husband the wife or the wife the husband. Not that these separate from the kingdom of God, as there are sins, which are restrained by command, not by counsel, on this account, because it is matter of condemnation not to obey the Lord when He commands: but that, which, within the kingdom of God itself, might be more largely possessed, if there were larger thoughts how they were to please God, will assuredly be less, when as this very thing is less thought of by necessity of marriage. Therefore he says, “Concerning virgins I have not command of the Lord.” For whosoever obeys not a command, is guilty and liable for punishment. Wherefore, because it is not sin to marry a wife or to be married, (but if it



were a sin, it would be forbidden by a “Command,”) on this account there is no “Command” of the Lord concerning virgins. But since, after we have shunned or had forgiveness of sins, we must approach eternal life, wherein is a certain or more excellent glory, to be assigned not unto all who shall live for ever, but unto certain there; in order to obtain which it is not enough to have been set free from sins, unless there be vowed unto Him, Who setteth us free, something, which it is no matter of fault not to have vowed, but matter of praise to have vowed and performed; he saith, “I give counsel, as having obtained mercy from God that I should be faithful.” For neither ought I to grudge faithful counsel, who not by my own merits, but by the mercy of God, am faithful. “I think therefore that this is good, by reason of the present necessity.” This, saith he, on which I have not command of the Lord, but give counsel, that is concerning virgins, I think to be good by reason of the present necessity. For I know what the necessity of the present time, unto which marriages serve, compels, that the things of God be less thought of than is enough for the obtaining that glory, which shall not be of all, although they abide in eternal life and salvation: “For star differeth from star in brightness; so also the Resurrection of the dead. It is,” therefore, “good for a man so to be.”

15. After that the same Apostle adds, and says, “Thou art bound to a wife, seek not loosening: thou art loosed from a wife, seek not a wife.” Of these two, that, which be set first, pertains unto command, against which it is not lawful to do. For it is not lawful to put away a wife, save because of fornication, as the Lord Himself saith in the Gospel. But that, which he added, “Thou art loosed from a wife, seek not a wife,” is a sentence of counsel, not of command; therefore it is lawful to do, but it is better not to do. Lastly, he added straightway, “Both if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not.” But, after that former saying of his, “Thou art bound to a wife, seek not loosening,” he added not, did he, “And if thou shalt have loosed, thou hast not sinned?” For he had already said above, “But to these, who are in marriage, I command, not I, but the Lord, that the wife depart not from her husband: but, if she shall have departed, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled unto her own husband;” for it may come to pass that she depart, not through any fault of her own, but of her husband. Then he saith, “And

let not the man put away his wife,” which, nevertheless, he set down of command of the Lord: nor did he then add, And, if he shall have put her away, he sinneth not. For this is a command, not to obey which is sin: not a counsel, which if you shall be unwilling to use, you will obtain less good, not do any ill. On this account, after he had said, “Thou art loosed from a wife, seek not a wife;” because he was not giving command, in order that there be not evil done, but was giving counsel, in order that there be done what is better: straightway he added, “Both, if thou shall have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not.”

16. Yet he added, “But such shall have tribulation of the flesh, but I spare you:” in this manner exhorting unto virginity, and continual continence, so as some little to alarm also from marriage, with all modesty, not as from a matter evil and unlawful, but as from one burdensome and troublesome. For it is one thing to incur dishonor of the flesh, and another to have tribulation of the flesh: the one is matter of crime to do, the other of labor to suffer, which for the most part men refuse not even for the most honorable duties. But for the having of marriage, now at this time, wherein there is no service done unto Christ about to come through descent of flesh by the begetting of the family itself, to take upon one to bear that tribulation of the flesh, which the Apostle foretells to such as shall be married, would be extremely foolish, did not incontinent persons fear, lest, through the temptation of Satan, they should fall into damnable sins. But whereas he says that he spares them, who he saith will have tribulation of the flesh, there suggests itself to me in the mean while no sounder interpretation, than that he was unwilling to open, and unfold in words, this self-same tribulation of the flesh which he fore-announced to those who choose marriage, in suspicions of jealousy of married life, in the begetting and nurture of children, in fears and sorrows of childlessness. For how very few, after they have bound themselves with the bonds of marriage, are not drawn and driven to and fro by these feelings? And this we ought not to exaggerate, lest we spare not the very persons, who the Apostle thought were to be spared.

17. Only by this, which I have briefly set down, the reader ought to be set on his guard against those, who, in this that is written, “but such shall have

tribulation of the flesh but I spare you,” falsely charge marriage, as indirectly condemned by this sentence; as though he were unwilling to utter the condemnation itself, when he saith, “But I spare you;” so that, forsooth, when he spares them, he spared not his own soul, as saying falsely, “And, if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not.” And this, whoso believe or would have believed concerning holy Scripture, they, as it were prepare for themselves a way for liberty of lying, or for defense of their own perverse opinion, in whatever case they hold other sentiments than what sound doctrine demands. For if there shall be alleged any plain statement from the divine books, whereby to refute their errors, this they have at hand as a shield, whereby defending themselves as it were against the truth, they lay themselves bare to be wounded by the devil: to say that the author of the book did not speak the truth in this instance, at one time in order to spare the weak, at another in order to alarm despisers: just as a case shall come to hand, wherein to defend their own perverse opinion: and thus, whilst they had rather defend than amend their own opinions, they essay to break the authority of holy Scripture, whereby alone all proud and hard necks are broken.

18. Wherefore I admonish both men and women who follow after perpetual continence and holy virginity, that they so set their own good before marriage, as that they judge not marriage an evil: and that they understand that it was in no way of deceit, but of plain truth that it was said by the Apostle, “Whoso gives in marriage does well; and whoso gives not in marriage, does better; and, if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not;” and a little after, “But she wilt be more blessed, if she shall have continued so, according to my judgment.” And, that the judgment should not be thought human, he adds, “But I think I also have the Spirit of God.” This is the doctrine of the Lord, this of the Apostles, this true, this sound, so to choose greater gifts, as that the lesser be not condemned. The truth of God, in the Scripture of God, is better than virginity of man in the mind or flesh of any. Let what is chaste be so loved, as that what is true be not denied. For what evil thought may they not have even concerning their own flesh, who believe that the tongue of the Apostle, in that very place, wherein he was

commending virginity of body, was not virgin from corruption of lying. In the first place, therefore, and chiefly, let such as choose the good of virginity, hold most firmly that the holy Scriptures have in nothing spoken lies; and, thus, that that also is true which is said, “And if thou shall have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not.” And let them not think that the so great good of virgin chastity is made less, if marriage shall not be an evil. Yea rather, let her hence feel confident, rather, that there is prepared for her a palm of greater glory, who feared not to be condemned, in case she were married, but desired to receive a more honorable crown, in that she was not married. Whoso therefore shall be willing to abide without marriage, let them not flee from marriage as a pitfall of sin; but let them surmount it as a hill of the lesser good, in order that they may rest in the mountain of the greater, continence. It is on this condition, forsooth, that this hill is dwelt on; that one leave it not when he will. For, “a woman is bound, so long as her husband liveth.” However unto widowed continence one ascends from it as from a step: but for the sake of virgin continence, one must either turn aside from it by not consenting to suitors, or overleap it by anticipating suitors.

19. But lest any should think that of two works, the good and the better, the rewards will be equal, on this account it was necessary to treat against those, who have so interpreted that saying of the Apostle, “But I think that this is good by reason of the present necessity,” as to say that virginity is of use not in order to the kingdom of heaven, but in order to this present time: as though in that eternal life, they, who had chosen this better part, would have nothing more than the rest of men. And in this discussion when we came to that saying of the same Apostle, “But such shall have tribulation of the flesh, but I spare you;” we fell in with other disputants, who so far from making marriage equal to perpetual virginity, altogether condemned it. For whereas both are errors, either to equal marriage to holy virginity, or to condemn it: by fleeing from one another to excess, these two errors come into open collision, in that they have been unwilling to hold the mean of truth: whereby, both by sure reason and authority of holy Scriptures, we both discover that marriage is not a sin, and yet equal it not to the good either of virginal or even of widowed chastity. Some forsooth by aiming at virginity, have thought marriage hateful even as adultery: but others, by

defending marriage, would have the excellence of perpetual continence to deserve nothing more than married chastity; as though either the good of Susanna be the lowering of Mary: or the greater good of Mary ought to be the condemnation of Susanna.

20. Far be it, therefore, that the Apostle so said, unto such as are married or are about to marry, "But I spare you," as if he were unwilling to say what punishment is due to the married in another life. Far be it that she, whom Daniel set free from temporal judgment, be cast by Paul into hell! Far be it that her husband's bed be unto her punishment before the judgment seat of Christ, keeping faith to which she chose, under false charge of adultery, to meet either danger, or death! To what effect that speech, "It is better for me to fall into your hands, than to sin in the sight of God:" if God had been about, not to set her free because she kept married chastity, but to condemn her because she had married? And now so often as married chastity is by truth of holy Scripture justified against such as bring calumnies and charges against marriage, so often is Susanna by the Holy Spirit defended against false witnesses, so often is she set free from a false charge, and with much greater ado. For then against one married woman, now against all; then of hidden and untrue adultery, now of true and open marriage, an accusation is laid. Then one woman, upon what the unjust elders said, now all husbands and wives, upon what the Apostle would not say, are accused. It was, forsooth, your condemnation, say they, that he was silent on, when he said, "But I spare you." Who (saith) this? Surely he, who had said above; "And, if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not." Why, therefore, wherein he hath been silent through modesty, suspect ye a charge against marriage; and wherein he hath spoken openly, recognize ye not a defense of marriage? What, doth he condemn by his silence them whom he acquitted by his words? Is it not now a milder charge, to charge Susanna, not with marriage, but with adultery itself, than to charge the doctrine of the Apostle with falsehood? What in so great peril could we do, were it not as sure and plain that chaste marriage ought not to be condemned, as it is sure and plain that holy Scripture cannot lie?

21. Here some one will say, What has this to do with holy virginity, or perpetual continence, the setting forth of which was undertaken in this discourse? To whom I make answer in the first place, what I mentioned above, that the glory of that greater good is greater from the fact that, in order to obtain it, the good of married life is surmounted, not the sin of marriage shunned. Otherwise it would be enough for perpetual continence, not to be specially praised, but only not to be blamed: if it were maintained on this account, because it was a crime to wed. In the next place, because it is not by human judgment, but by authority of Divine Scripture, that men must be exhorted unto so excellent a gift, we must plead not in a commonplace manner, or merely by the way, that divine Scripture itself seem not to any one in any matter to have lied. For they discourage rather than exhort holy virgins, who compel them to continue so by passing sentence on marriage. For whence can they feel sure that that is true, which is written, "And he, who gives her not in marriage, does better:" if they think that false, which yet is written close above, "Both he, who gives his virgin, does well?" But, if they shall without all doubt have believed Scripture speaking of the good of marriage, confirmed by the same most true authority of the divine oracle, they will hasten beyond unto their own better part with glowing and confident eagerness. Wherefore we have already spoken enough for the business which we have taken in hand, and, so far as we could, have shown, that neither that saying of the Apostle, "But I think that this is good by reason of the present necessity," is so to be understood, as though in this life holy virgins are better than faithful women married, but are equal in the kingdom of heaven, and in a future life: nor that other, where he saith of such as wed, "But such shall have tribulation of the flesh, but I spare you;" is to be so understood, as though he chose rather to be silent on, than to speak of, the sin and condemnation of marriage. Forsooth two errors, contrary the one to the other, have, through not understanding them, taken hold of each one of these two sentences. For that concerning the present necessity they interpret in their own favor, who contend to equal such as wed to such as wed not: but this, where it is said, "But I spare you," they who presume to condemn such as wed. But we, according to the faith and sound doctrine of holy Scriptures, both say that marriage is no sin, and yet set its good not only below virginal, but also below widowed continence; and say that the present necessity of married persons is an

hindrance to their desert, not indeed unto life eternal, but unto an excellent glory and honor, which is reserved for perpetual continence: and that at this time marriage is not expedient save for such as contain not; and that on the tribulation of the flesh, which cometh from the affection of the flesh, without which marriages of incontinent persons cannot be, the Apostle neither wished to be silent, as forewarning what was true, nor to unfold more fully, as sparing man's weakness.

22. And now by plainest witnesses of divine Scriptures, such as according to the small measure of our memory we shall be able to remember, let it more clearly appear, that, not on account of the present life of this world, but on account of that future life which is promised in the kingdom of heaven, we are to choose perpetual continence. But who but must observe this in that which the same Apostle says a little after, "Whoso is without a wife has thought of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord: but whoso is joined in marriage has thought of the things of the world, how to please his wife. And a woman unmarried and a virgin is divided; she that is unmarried is careful about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit: but she that is married is careful about the things of the world, how to please her husband." Certainly he saith not, hath thought of the things of a state without care in this world, to pass her time without weightier troubles; nor doth he say that a woman unmarried and a virgin is divided, that is, distinguished, and separated from her who is married, for this end, that the unmarried woman be without care in this life, in order to avoid temporal troubles, which the married woman is not free from: but, "She hath thought," saith he, "of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord; and is careful about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit." Unless to such a degree, perchance, each be foolishly contentious, as to essay to assert, that it is not on account of the kingdom of heaven, but on account of this present world, that we wish to "please the Lord," or that it is on account of this present life, not on account of life eternal, that they are "holy both in body and spirit." To believe this, what else is it, than to be more miserable than all men? For so the Apostle saith, "If in this life only we are hoping in Christ, we are more miserable than all men." What? is he who breaks his bread to the hungry, if he do it only on account of this life, a fool; and shall he be prudent, who chastens his own

body even unto continence, whereby he hath no intercourse even in marriage, if it shall profit him nought in the kingdom of heaven?

23. Lastly, let us hear the Lord Himself delivering most plain judgment on this matter. For, upon His speaking after a divine and fearful manner concerning husband and wife not separating, save on account of fornication, His disciples said to Him, “If the case be such with a wife, it is not good to marry.” To whom He saith, “Not all receive this saying. For there are eunuchs who were so born: but there are others who were made by men: and there are eunuchs, who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven: whoso can receive, let him receive.” What could be said more true, what more clear? Christ saith, the Truth saith, the Power and Wisdom of God saith, that they, who of pious purpose have contained from marrying a wife, make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven: and against this, human vanity with impious rashness contends, that they, who do so, shun only the present necessity of the troubles of married life, but in the kingdom of heaven have no more than others.

24. But concerning what eunuchs speaketh God by the prophet Isaiah, unto whom He saith that He will give in His house and in His wall a place by name, much better than of sons and daughters, save concerning these, who make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven? For for these, whose bodily organ is without strength, so that they cannot beget, (such as are the eunuchs of rich men and of kings,) it is surely enough, when they become Christians, and keep the commands of God, yet have this purpose, that, if they could, they would have wives, to be made equal to the rest of the faithful in the house of God, who are married, who bring up in the fear of God a family which they have lawfully and chastely gotten, teaching their sons to set their hope on God; but not to receive a better place than of sons and daughters. For it is not of virtue of the soul, but of necessity of the flesh, that they marry not wives. Let who will contend that the Prophet foretold this of those eunuchs who have suffered mutilation of body; that even also helps the cause which we have undertaken. For God hath not preferred these eunuchs to such as have no place in His house, but assuredly to those who keep the desert of married life in begetting sons. For, when He saith, “I will give unto them a place much better;” He shows



that one is also given unto the married, but much inferior. Therefore, to allow that in the house of God there will be the eunuchs after the flesh spoken of above, who were not in the People of Israel: because we see that these also themselves, whereas they become not Jews, yet become Christians: and that the Prophet spake not of them, who through purpose of continence seeking not marriage, make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven: is any one so madly opposed to the truth as to believe that eunuchs made so in the flesh have a better place than married persons in the house of God, and to contend that persons being of pious purpose continent, chastening the body even unto contempt of marriage, making themselves eunuchs, not in the body, but in the very root of concupiscence, practising an heavenly and angelic life in an earthly mortal state, are on a level with the deserts of the married; and, being a Christian, to gainsay Christ when He praises those who have made themselves eunuchs, not for the sake of this world, but for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, affirming that this is of use for the present life, not for a future? What else remains for these, save to assert that the kingdom of heaven itself pertains unto this temporal life, wherein we now are? For why should not blind presumption advance even to this madness? And what more full of phrensy than this assertion? For, although at times the Church, even that which is at this time, is called the kingdom of heaven; certainly it is so called for this end, because it is being gathered together for a future and eternal life. Although, therefore, it have the promise of the present, and of a future life, yet in all its good works it looks not to “the things that are seen, but to what are not seen. For what are seen are temporal; but what are not seen, are eternal.”

25. Nor indeed hath the Holy Spirit failed to speak what should be of open and unshaken avail against these men, most shamelessly and madly obstinate, and should repel their assault, as of wild beasts, from His sheep-fold, by defences that may not be stormed. For, after He had said concerning eunuchs, “I will give unto them in My house and in My wall a named place, much better than of sons and daughters;” lest any too carnal should think that there was any thing temporal to be hoped for in these words, straightway He added, “An eternal name I will give unto them, nor shall it ever fail:” as though He should say, Why dost thou draw back,

impious blindness? Why dost thou draw back? Why dost thou pour the clouds of thy perverseness over the clear (sky) of truth? Why in so great light of Scriptures dost thou seek after darkness from out which to lay snares? Why dost thou promise temporal advantage only to holy persons exercising continence? “An eternal name I will give unto them:” why, where persons keep from all sexual intercourse, and also in the very fact that they abstain from these, have thought of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord, do you essay to refer them unto earthly advantage? “An eternal name I will give unto them.” Why contend you that the kingdom of heaven, for the sake of which holy eunuchs have made themselves eunuchs, is to be understood in this life only? “An eternal name I will give unto them.” And if haply in this place you endeavor to take the word itself eternal in the sense of lasting for a long time, I add, I heap up, I tread in, “nor shall it ever fail.” What more seek you? What more say you? This eternal name, whatever it be, unto the eunuchs of God, which assuredly signifies a certain peculiar and excellent glory, shall not be in common with many, although set in the same kingdom, and in the same house. For on this account also, perhaps, it is called a name, that it distinguishes those, to whom it is given, from the rest.

26. What then, say they, is the meaning of that penny, which is given in payment to all alike when the work of the vineyard is ended? whether it be to those who have labored from the first hour, or to those who have labored one hour? What assuredly doth it signify, but something, which all shall have in common, such as is life eternal itself, the kingdom of heaven itself, where shall be all, whom God hath predestinated, called, justified, glorified? “For it behoveth that this corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality.” This is that penny, wages for all. Yet “star differeth from star in glory; so also the resurrection of the dead.” These are the different merits of the Saints. For, if by that penny the heaven were signified, have not all the stars in common to be in the heaven? And yet, “There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, another of the stars.” If that penny were taken for health of body, have not all the members, when we are well, health in common; and, should this health continue even unto death, is it not in all alike and equally? And yet, “God hath set the members, each one of them, in the body, as He would;” that

neither the whole be an eye, nor the whole hearing, nor the whole smelling: and, whatever else there is, it hath its own property, although it have health equally with all. Thus because life eternal itself shall be alike to all, an equal penny was assigned to all; but, because in that life eternal itself the lights of merits shall shine with a distinction, there are “many mansions” in the house of the Father: and, by this means, in the penny not unlike, one lives not longer than another; but in the many mansions, one is honored with greater brightness than another.

27. Therefore go on, Saints of God, boys and girls, males and females, unmarried men, and women; go on and persevere unto the end. Praise more sweetly the Lord, Whom ye think on more richly: hope more happily in Him, Whom ye serve more instantly: love more ardently Him, whom ye please more attentively. With loins girded, and lamps burning, wait for the Lord, when He cometh from the marriage. Ye shall bring unto the marriage of the Lamb a new song, which ye shall sing on your harps. Not surely such as the whole earth singeth, unto which it is said, “Sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, the whole earth” : but such as no one shall be able to utter but you. For thus there saw you in the Apocalypse a certain one beloved above others by the Lamb, who had been wont to lie on His breast, and who used to drink in, and burst forth, the Word of God above wonders of heaven. He saw you twelve times twelve thousand of holy harpers, of undefiled virginity in body, of inviolate truth in heart; and he wrote of you, that ye follow the Lamb whithersoever He shall go. Where think we that This Lamb goeth, where no one either dares or is able to follow save you? Where think we that He goeth? Into what glades and meadows? Where, I think, the grass are joys; not vain joys of this world, lying madnesses; nor joys such as shall be in the kingdom of God itself, for the rest that are not virgins; but distinct from the portion of joys of all the rest. Joy of the virgins of Christ, of Christ, in Christ, with Christ, after Christ, through Christ, for Christ. The joys peculiar to the virgins of Christ, are not the same as of such as are not virgins, although of Christ. For there are to different persons different joys, but to none such. Go (enter) into these, follow the Lamb, because the Flesh of the Lamb also is assuredly virgin. For this He retained in Himself when grown up, which He took not away from His Mother by His conception and birth. Follow Him, as ye deserve, in virginity of heart

and flesh, wheresoever He shall have gone. For what is it to follow, but to imitate? Because “Christ hath suffered for us,” leaving us an example, as saith the Apostle Peter, “that we should follow His steps.” Him each one follows in that, wherein he imitates Him: not so far forth as He is the only Son of God, by Whom all things were made; but so far forth as, the Son of Man, He set forth in Himself, what behoved for us to imitate. And many things in Him are set forth for all to imitate: but virginity of the flesh not for all; for they have not what to do in order to be virgins, in whom it hath been already brought to pass that they be not virgins.

28. Therefore let the rest of the faithful, who have lost virginity, follow the Lamb, not whithersoever He shall have gone, but so far as ever they shall have been able. But they are able every where, save when He walks in the grace of virginity. “Blessed are the poor in spirit;” imitate Him, Who, whereas “He was rich, was made poor for your sakes.” “Blessed are the meek;” imitate Him, Who said, “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.” “Blessed are they that mourn;” imitate Him, Who “wept over” Jerusalem. “Blessed are they, who hunger and thirst after righteousness;” imitate Him, Who said, “My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me.” “Blessed are the merciful;” imitate Him, Who came to the help of him who was wounded by robbers, and who lay in the way half-dead and despaired of. “Blessed are the pure in heart;” imitate Him, “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.” “Blessed are the peace-makers;” imitate Him, Who said on behalf of His persecutors, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” “Blessed are they, who suffer persecution for righteousness sake;” imitate Him, Who “suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye follow His steps.” These things, whoso imitate, in these they follow the Lamb. But surely even married persons may go in those steps, although not setting their foot perfectly in the same print, yet walking in the same paths.

29. But, lo, That Lamb goeth by a Virgin road, how shall they go after Him, who have lost what there is no way for them to recover? Do ye, therefore, do ye go after Him, His virgins; do ye thither also go after Him, in that on this one account whithersoever He shall have gone, ye follow Him: for unto any other gift whatsoever of holiness, whereby to follow Him, we can

exhort married persons, save this which they have lost beyond power of recovery. Do ye, therefore, follow Him, by holding with perseverance what ye have vowed with ardor. Go when ye can, that the good of virginity perish not from you, unto which ye can do nothing, in order that it may return. The rest of the multitude of the faithful will see you, which cannot unto this follow the Lamb; it will see you, it will not envy you: and by rejoicing together with you, what it hath not in itself, it will have in you. For that new song also, which is your own, it will not be able to utter; but it will not be unable to hear, and to be delighted with your so excellent good: but ye, who shall both utter and hear, in that what ye shall say, this ye shall hear of yourselves, will exult with greater happiness, and reign with greater joy. But they will have no sorrow on account of your greater joy, to whom this shall be wanting. Forsooth That Lamb, Whom ye shall follow whithersoever He shall have gone, will not desert those who cannot follow Him, where you can. Almighty is the Lamb, of Whom we speak. He both will go before you, and will not depart from them, when God shall be all in all. And they, who shall have less, shall not turn away in dislike from you: for, where there is no envying, difference exists with concord. Take to you, then, have trust, be strong, continue, ye who vow and pay unto the Lord your God vows of perpetual continence, not for the sake of this present world, but for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.

30. Ye also who have not yet made this vow, who are able to receive it, receive it. Run with perseverance, that ye may obtain. Take ye each his sacrifices, and enter ye into the courts of the Lord, not of necessity, having power over your own will. For not as, “Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shall not kill,” can it so be said, Thou shalt not wed. The former are demanded, the latter are offered. If the latter are done, they are praised: unless the former are done, they are condemned. In the former the Lord commands us what is due; but in the latter, if ye shall have spent any thing more, on His return He will repay you. Think of (whatever that be) within His wall “a place named, much better than of sons and of daughters.” Think of “an eternal name” there. Who unfolds of what kind that name shall be? Yet, whatever it shall be, it shall be eternal. By believing and hoping and loving this, ye have been able, not to shun marriage, as forbidden, but to fly past it, as allowed.

31. Whence the greatness of this service, unto the undertaking of which we have according to our strength exhorted, the more excellent and divine it is, the more doth it warn our anxiety, to say something not only concerning most glorious chastity, but also concerning safest humility. When then such as make profession of perpetual chastity, comparing themselves with married persons, shall have discovered, that, according to the Scriptures, the others are below both in work and wages, both in vow and reward, let what is written straightway come into their mind, “By how much thou art great, by so much humble thyself in all things: and thou shalt find favor before God.” The measure of humility for each hath been given from the measure of his greatness itself: unto which pride is full of danger, which layeth the greater wait against persons the greater they be. On this followeth envying, as a daughter in her train; forsooth pride straightway giveth birth to her, nor is she ever without such a daughter and companion. By which two evils, that is, pride and envying, is the devil (a devil). Therefore it is against pride, the mother of envying, that the whole Christian discipline chiefly wars. For this teaches humility, whereby both to gain and to keep charity; of which after that it had been said, “Charity envieth not;” as though we were asking the reason, how it comes to pass that it envieth not, he straightway added, “is not puffed up;” as though he should say, on this account it hath not envying, in that neither hath it pride. Therefore the Teacher of humility, Christ, first “emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, made obedient even unto death, even the death of the Cross.” But His teaching itself, how carefully it suggests humility, and how earnest and instant it is in commanding this, who can easily unfold, and bring together all witnesses for proof of this matter? This let him essay to do, or do, whosoever shall wish to write a separate treatise on humility; but of this present work the end proposed is different, and it hath been undertaken on a matter so great, as that it hath chiefly to guard against pride.

32. Wherefore a few witnesses, which the Lord deigns to suggest to my mind, I proceed to mention, from out the teaching of Christ concerning humility, such as perhaps may be enough for my purpose. His discourse, the first which He delivered to His disciples at greater length, began from this. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” And

these without all controversy we take to be humble. The faith of that Centurion He on this account chiefly praised, and said that He had not found in Israel so great faith, because he believed with so great humility as to say, "I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof." Whence also Matthew for no other reason said that he "came" unto Jesus, (whereas Luke most plainly signifies that he came not unto Him himself, but sent his friends,) save that by his most faithful humility he himself came unto Him more than they whom he sent. Whence also is that of the Prophet, "The Lord is very high, and hath respect unto things that are lowly: but what are very high He noteth afar off;" assuredly as not coming unto Him. Whence also He saith to that woman of Canaan, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it done unto thee as thou wilt;" whom above He had called a dog, and had made answer that the bread of the sons was not to be cast to her. And this she taking with humility had said, "Even so, Lord; for the dogs also eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." And thus what by continual crying she obtained not, by humble confession she earned. Hence also those two are set forth praying in the Temple, the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican, for the sake of those who seem to themselves just and despise the rest of men, and the confession of sins is set before the reckoning up of merits. And assuredly the Pharisee was rendering thanks unto God by reason of those things wherein he was greatly self-satisfied. "I render thanks to Thee," saith he, "that I am not even as the rest of men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers, even as also this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all things whatsoever I possess. But the Publican was standing afar off, not daring to lift up his eyes to Heaven, but beating his breast, saying, God be merciful unto me a sinner." But there follows the divine judgment, "Verily I say unto you, the Publican went down from the Temple justified more than that Pharisee." Then the cause is shown, why this is just; "Forasmuch as he who exalteth himself shall be humbled, and whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted." Therefore it may come to pass, that each one both shun real evils, and reflect on real goods in himself, and render thanks for these unto "the Father of lights, from Whom cometh down every best gift, and every perfect gift," and yet be rejected by reason of the sin of haughtiness, if through pride, even in his thought alone, which is before God, he insult other sinners, and specially when confessing their sins in prayer, unto whom is due not upbraiding with arrogance, but pity without

despair. What is it that, when His disciples were questioning among themselves, who of them should be greater, He set a little child before their eyes, saying, “Unless ye shall be as this child, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?” Did He not chiefly commend humility, and set in it the desert of greatness? Or when unto the sons of Zebedee desiring to be at His side in lofty seats He so made answer, as that they should rather think of having to drink the Cup of His Passion, wherein He humbled Himself even unto death, even the death of the Cross, than with proud desire demand to be preferred to the rest; what did He show, save, that He would be a bestower of exaltation upon them, who should first follow Him as a teacher of humility? And now, in that, when about to go forth unto His Passion, He washed the feet of His disciples, and most openly taught them to do for their fellow-disciples and fellow-servants this, which He their Lord and Master had done for them; how greatly did He commend humility? And in order to commend this He chose also that time, wherein they were looking on Him, as immediately about to die, with great longing; assuredly about to retain in their memory this especially, which their Master, Whom they were to imitate, had pointed out to them as the last thing. But He did this at that time, which surely He could have done on other days also before, wherein He had been conversant with them; at which time if it were done, this same would indeed be delivered, but certainly would not be so received.

33. Whereas, then, all Christians have to guard humility, forasmuch as it is from Christ that they are called Christians, Whose Gospel no one considers with care, but that he discovers Him to be a Teacher of humility; specially is it becoming that they be followers and keepers of this virtue, who excel the rest of men in any great good, in order that they may have a great care of that, which I set down in the beginning, “By how much thou art great, by so much humble thyself in all things, and thou shall find grace before God.” Wherefore, because perpetual Continence and specially virginity, is a great good in the Saints of God, they must with all watchfulness beware, that it be not corrupted with pride.

34. Paul the Apostle censures evil unmarried women, curious and prating, and says that this fault comes of idleness. “But at the same time,” saith he,



“being idle they learn to go about to houses: but not only idle, but curious also and prating, speaking what they ought not.” Of these he had said above, “But younger widows avoid; for when they have past their time in delights, they wish to wed in Christ; having condemnation, in that they have made void their first faith:” that is, have not continued in that, which they had vowed at the first. And yet he saith not, they marry, but “they wish to marry.” For many of them are recalled from marrying, not by love of a noble purpose, but by fear of open shame, which also itself comes of pride, whereby persons fear to displease men more than God. These, therefore, who wish to marry, and do not marry on this account, because they cannot with impunity, who would do better to marry than to be burned, that is, than to be laid waste in their very conscience by the hidden flame of lust, who repent of their profession, and who feel their confession irksome; unless they correct and set right their heart, and by the fear of God again overcome their lust, must be accounted among the dead; whether they pass their time in delights, whence the Apostle says, “But she who passes her time in delights, living, is dead;” or whether in labors and fastings, which are useless where there is no correction of the heart, and serve rather for display than amendment. I do not, for my part, impose on such a great regard for humility, in whom pride itself is confounded, and bloodstained by wound of conscience. Nor on such as are drunken, or covetous, or who are lying in any other kind whatever of damnable disease, at the same time that they have profession of bodily continence, and through perverse manners are at variance with their own name, do I impose this great anxiety about pious humility: unless haply in these evils they shall dare even to make a display of themselves, unto whom it is not enough, that the punishments of these are deferred. Nor am I treating of these, in whom there is a certain aim of pleasing, either by more elegant dress than the necessity of so great profession demands, or by remarkable manner of binding the head, whether by bosses of hair swelling forth, or by coverings so yielding, that the fine network below appears: unto these we must give precepts, not as yet concerning humility, but concerning chastity itself, or virgin modesty. Give me one who makes profession of perpetual continence, and who is free from these, and all such faults and spots of conduct; for this one I fear pride, for this so great good I am in alarm from the swelling of arrogance. The more there is in any one on account of which to be self-pleased, the more I

fear, lest, by pleasing self, he please not Him, Who “resisteth the proud, but unto the humble giveth grace.”

35. Certainly we are to contemplate in Christ Himself, the chief instruction and pattern of virginal purity. What further precept then concerning humility shall I give to the continent, than what He saith to all, “Learn of Me, in that I am meek and lowly of heart?” when He had made mention above of His greatness, and, wishing to show this very thing, how great He was, and how little He had been made for our sakes, saith, “I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, in that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto little children. Even so, O Father, in that so it hath been pleasing before Thee. All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; and no one knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son shall have willed to reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, in that I am meek and lowly of heart.” He, He, unto Whom the Father hath delivered all things, and Whom no one knoweth but the Father, and Who alone, (and he, unto whom He shall have willed to reveal Him), knoweth the Father, saith not, “Learn of Me” to make the world, or to raise the dead, but, “in that I am meek and lowly of heart.” O saving teaching? O Teacher and Lord of mortals, unto whom death was pledged and passed on in the cup of pride, He would not teach what Himself was not, He would not bid what Himself did not. I see Thee, O good Jesu, with the eyes of faith, which Thou hast opened for me, as in an assembly of the human race, crying out and saying, “Come unto Me, and learn of Me.” What, I beseech Thee, through Whom all things were made, O Son of God, and the Same Who was made among all things, O Son of Man: to learn what of Thee, come we to Thee? “For that I am meek,” saith He, “and lowly of heart.” Is it to this that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden in Thee are brought, that we learn this of Thee as a great thing, that Thou art “meek and lowly of heart?” Is it so great a thing to be little, that it could not at all be learned unless it were brought to pass by Thee, Who art so great? So indeed it is. For by no other way is there found out rest for the soul, save when the unquiet swelling hath been dispersed, whereby it was great unto itself, when it was not sound unto Thee.

36. Let them hear Thee, and let them come to Thee, and let them learn of Thee to be meek and lowly, who seek Thy Mercy and Truth, by living unto Thee, unto Thee, not unto themselves. Let him hear this, laboring and laden, who is weighed down by his burthen, so as not to dare to lift up his eyes to heaven, that sinner beating his breast, and drawing near from afar. Let him hear, the centurion, not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under his roof. Let him hear, Zaccheus, chief of publicans, restoring fourfold the gains of damnable sins. Let her hear, the woman in the city a sinner, by so much the more full of tears at Thy feet, the more alien she had been from Thy steps. Let them hear, the harlots and publicans, who enter into the kingdom of heaven before the Scribes and Pharisees. Let them hear, every kind of such ones, feasting with whom were cast in Thy teeth as a charge, forsooth, as though by whole persons who sought not a physician, whereas Thou camest not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. All these, when they are converted unto Thee, easily grow meek, and are humbled before Thee, mindful of their own most unrighteous life, and of Thy most indulgent mercy, in that, “where sin hath abounded, grace hath abounded more.”

37. But regard the troops of virgins, holy boys and girls: this kind hath been trained up in Thy Church: there for Thee it hath been budding from its mother’s breasts; for Thy Name it hath loosed its tongue to speak, Thy Name, as through the milk of its infancy, it hath had poured in and hath sucked, no one of this number can say, “I, who before was a blasphemer, and persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy, in that I did in being ignorant, in unbelief.” Yea more, that, which Thou commandedst not, but only didst set forth, for such as would, to seize, saying, “Whoso can receive, let him receive;” they have seized, they have vowed, and, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, not for that Thou threatenedst, but for that Thou exhortedst, they have made themselves eunuchs. To these cry out, let these hear Thee, in that Thou art “meek and lowly of heart.” Let these, by how much they are great, by so much humble themselves in all things, that they may find grace before Thee. They are just: but they are not, are they, such as Thou, justifying the ungodly? They are chaste: but them in sins their mothers nurtured in their wombs. They are holy, but Thou art also Holy of Holies. They are virgins, but they are not also born of virgins. They are wholly chaste both in spirit and in flesh: but they are not the Word made

flesh. And yet let them learn, not from those unto whom Thou forgivest sins, but from Thee Thyself, The Lamb of God Who takest away the sins of the world, in that Thou art “meek and lowly of heart.”

38. I send thee not, soul that art religiously chaste, that hast not given the reins to fleshly appetite even so far as to allowed marriage, that hast not indulged thy body about to depart even to the begetting one to succeed thee, that hast sustained aloft thy earthly members, afloat to accustom them to heaven; I send thee not, in order that thou mayest learn humility, unto publicans and sinners, who yet enter into the kingdom of heaven before the proud: I send thee not to these: for they, who have been set free from the gulf of uncleanness, are unworthy that undefiled virginity be sent to them to take pattern from. I send thee unto the King of Heaven, unto Him, by Whom men were created, and Who was created among men for the sake of men; unto Him, Who is fair of beauty above the sons of men, and despised by the sons of men on behalf of the sons of men: unto Him, Who, ruling the immortal angels, disdained not to do service unto mortals. Him, at any rate, not unrighteousness, but charity, made humble; “Charity, which rivalleth not, is not puffed up, seeketh not her own;” forasmuch as “Christ also pleased not Himself, but, as it is written of Him, The reproaches of such as reproached Thee have fallen upon Me.” Go then, come unto Him, and learn, in that He is “meek and lowly of heart.” Thou shalt not go unto him, who dared not by reason of the burden of unrighteousness to lift up his eyes to heaven, but unto Him, Who by the weight of charity came down from heaven. Thou shalt not go unto her, who watered with tears the feet of her Lord, seeking forgiveness of heavy sins; but thou shalt go unto Him, Who, granting forgiveness of all sins, washed the feet of His own disciples. I know the dignity of thy virginity; I propose not to thee to imitate the Publican humbly accusing his own faults; but I fear for the Pharisee proudly boasting of his own merits. I say not, Be thou such as she, of whom it was said, “There are forgiven unto her many sins, in that she hath loved much;” but I fear lest, as thinking that thou hast little forgiven to thee, thou love little.

39. I fear, I say, greatly for thee, lest, when thou boastest that thou wilt follow the Lamb wheresoever He shall have gone, thou be unable by reason

of swelling pride to follow Him through strait ways. It is good for thee, O virgin soul, that thus, as thou art a virgin, thus altogether keeping in thy heart that thou hast been born again, keeping in thy flesh that thou hast been born, thou yet conceive of the fear of the Lord, and give birth to the spirit of salvation. "Fear," indeed, "there is not in charity, but perfect charity," as it is written, "casteth out fear:" but fear of men, not of God: fear of temporal evils, not of the Divine Judgment at the last. "Be not thou high-minded, but fear." Love thou the goodness of God; fear thou His severity: neither suffers thee to be proud. For by loving you fear, lest you grievously offend One Who is loved and loves. For what more grievous offense, than that by pride thou displease Him, Who for thy sake hath been displeasing to the proud? And where ought there to be more that "chaste fear abiding for ever and ever," than in thee, who hast no thought of the things of this world, how to please a wedded partner; but of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord? That other fear is not in charity, but this chaste fear quitteth not charity. If you love not, fear lest you perish; if you love, fear lest you displease. That fear charity casteth out, with this it runneth within. The Apostle Paul also says, "For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the spirit of adoption of sons, wherein we cry, Abba, Father." I believe that he speaks of that fear, which had been given in the Old Testament, lest the temporal goods should be lost, which God had promised unto those not yet sons under grace, but as yet slaves under the law. There is also the fear of eternal fire, to serve God in order to avoid which is assuredly not yet of perfect charity. For the desire of the reward is one thing, the fear of punishment another. They are different sayings, "Whither shall I go away from Thy Spirit, and from Thy face whither shall I flee?" and, "One thing I have sought of the Lord, this I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord through all the days of my life, that I may consider the delight of the Lord, that I be protected in His temple:" and, "Turn not away Thy face from me:" and, "My soul longeth and fainteth unto the courts of the Lord." Those sayings let him have had, who dared not to lift up his eyes to heaven; and she who was watering with tears His feet, in order to obtain pardon for her grievous sins; but these do thou have, who art careful about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit. With those sayings there companies fear which hath torment, which perfect charity casteth forth; but with these sayings

there companies chaste fear of the Lord, that abideth for ever and ever. And to both kinds it must be said, “Be not thou high-minded, but fear;” that man neither of defense of his sins, nor of presumption of righteousness set himself up. For Paul also himself, who saith, “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;” yet, fear being a companion of charity, saith, “With fear and much trembling was I towards you:” and that saying, which I have mentioned, that the engrafted wild olive tree be not proud against the broken branches of the olive tree, himself made use of, saying, “Be not thou high-minded, but fear;” himself admonishing all the members of Christ in general, saith, “With fear and trembling work out your own salvation; for it is God Who worketh in you both to will and to do, according to His good pleasure;” that it seem not to pertain unto the Old Testament what is written, “Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling.”

40. And what members of the holy body, which is the Church, ought more to take care, that upon them the holy Spirit may rest, than such as profess virginal holiness? But how doth He rest, where He findeth not His own place? what else than an humbled heart, to fill, not to leap back from; to raise up, not to weigh down? whereas it hath been most plainly said, “On whom shall rest My Spirit? On him that is humble and quiet, and trembles at My words.” Already thou livest righteously, already thou livest piously, thou livest chastely, holily, with virginal purity; as yet, however, thou livest here, and art thou not humbled at hearing, “What, is not human life upon earth a trial?” Doth it not drive thee back from over-confident arrogance, “Woe unto the world because of offenses?” Dost thou not tremble, lest thou be accounted among the many, whose “love waxeth cold, because that iniquity abounds?” Dost thou not smite thy breast, when thou hearest, “Wherefore, whoso thinketh that he standeth, let him see to it lest he fall?” Amid these divine warnings and human dangers, do we yet find it so hard to persuade holy virgins to humility?

41. Or are we indeed to believe that it is for any other reason, that God suffers to be mixed up with the number of your profession, many, both men and women, about to fall, than that by the fall of these your fear may be increased, whereby to repress pride; which God so hates, as that against this

one thing The Highest humbled Himself? Unless haply, in truth, thou shalt therefore fear less, and be more puffed up, so as to love little Him, Who hath loved thee so much, as to give up Himself for thee, because He hath forgiven thee little, living, forsooth from childhood, religiously, piously, with pious chastity, with inviolate virginity. As though in truth you ought not to love with much greater glow of affection Him, Who, whatsoever things He hath forgiven unto sinners upon their being turned to Him, suffered you not to fall into them. Or indeed that Pharisee, who therefore loved little, because he thought that little was forgiven him, was it for any other reason that he was blinded by this error, than because being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish his own, he had not been made subject unto the righteousness of God? But you, an elect race, and among the elect more elect, virgin choirs that follow the Lamb, even you “by grace have been saved through faith; and this not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God: not of works, lest haply any be elated. For we are His workmanship, created in Jesus Christ in good works, which God hath prepared, that in them we may walk.” What therefore, by how much the more ye are adorned by His gifts, shall ye by so much the less love Him? May He Himself turn away so dreadful madness! Wherefore forasmuch as the Truth has spoken the truth, that he, unto whom little is forgiven, loveth little; do ye, in order that ye may love with full glow of affection Him, Whom ye are free to love, being loosened from ties of marriage, account as altogether forgiven unto you, whatever of evil, by His governance, ye have not committed. For “your eyes ever unto the Lord, forasmuch as He shall pluck out of the net your feet,” and, “Except the Lord shall have kept the city, in vain hath he watched who keepeth it.” And speaking of Continence itself the Apostle says, “But I would that all men were as I myself; but each one hath his own proper gift from God; one in this way, and another in that way.” Who therefore bestoweth these gifts? Who distributeth his own proper gifts unto each as He will? Forsooth God, with Whom there is not unrighteousness, and by this means with what equity He makes some in this way, and others in that way, for man to know is either impossible or altogether hard: but that with equity He maketh, it is not lawful to doubt. “What,” therefore, “hast thou, which thou hast not received?” And by what perversity dost thou less love Him, of Whom thou hast received more?

42. Wherefore let this be the first thought for the putting on of humility, that God's virgin think not that it is of herself that she is such, and not rather that this best "gift cometh down from above from the Father of Lights, with Whom is no change nor shadow of motion." For thus she will not think that little hath been forgiven her, so as for her to love little, and, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish her own, not to be made subject to the righteousness of God. In which fault was that Simon who was surpassed by the woman, unto whom many sins were forgiven, because she loved much. But she will have more cautious and true thoughts, that we are so to account all sins as though forgiven, from which God keeps us that we commit them not. Witnesses are those expressions of pious prayers in holy Scriptures, whereby it is shown, that those very things, which are commanded by God, are not done save by His Gift and help, Who commands. For there is a falsehood in the asking for them, if we could do them without the help of His grace. What is there so generally and chiefly charged, as obedience whereby the Commandments of God are kept? And yet we find this wished for. "Thou," saith he, "hast charged, that Thy commandments be greatly kept." Then it follows, "O that my ways were directed to keep Thy righteousnesses: then shall I not be confounded, whilst I look unto all Thy commandments." That which he had set down above that God had commanded, that he wished might of himself be fulfilled. This is done assuredly, that there be not sin; but, if there hath been sin, the command is that one repent; lest by defense and excuse of sin he perish through pride, who hath done it, whilst he is unwilling that what he hath done perish through repentance. This also is asked of God, so that it may be understood that it is not done, save by His grant from Whom it is asked. "Set," saith he, "O Lord, a watch to my mouth, and a door of continence around my lips: let not my heart turn away unto evil words, to make excuses in sins, with men that work unrighteousness." If, therefore, both obedience, whereby we keep His commandments, and repentance whereby we excuse not our sins, are wished for and asked, it is plain that, when it is done, it is by His gift that it is possessed, by His help that it is fulfilled, yet more openly is it said by reason of obedience, "By the Lord the steps of a man are directed, and He shall will His way:" and of repentance the Apostle says, "if haply God may grant unto them repentance."



43. Concerning continence also itself hath it not been most openly said, “And when I knew that no one can be continent unless God give it, this also itself was a part of wisdom, to know whose gift it was?” But perhaps continence is the gift of God, but wisdom man bestows upon himself, whereby to understand, that that gift is, not his own, but of God. Yea, “The Lord maketh wise the blind:” and, “The testimony of the Lord is faithful, it giveth wisdom unto little ones:” and, “If any one want wisdom, let him ask of God, Who giveth unto all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him.” But it becometh virgins to be wise, that their lamps be not extinguished. How “wise,” save “not having high thoughts, but consenting unto the lowly.” For Wisdom Itself hath said unto man, “Lo, piety is wisdom!” If therefore thou hast nothing, which thou hast not received, “Be not high-minded, but fear.” And love not thou little, as though Him by Whom little hath been forgiven to thee; but, rather, love Him much, by Whom much hath been given to thee. For if he loves, unto whom it hath been given not to repay: how much more ought he to love, unto whom it hath been given to possess. For both, whosoever continues chaste from the beginning, is ruled by Him; and whosoever is made chaste instead of unchaste, is corrected by Him; and whosoever is unchaste even unto the end, is abandoned by Him. But this He can do by secret counsel, by unrighteous He cannot: and perhaps it is for this end that it lies hid, that there may be more fear, and less pride.

44. Next let not man, now that he knoweth that by the grace of God he is what he is, fall into another snare of pride, so as by lifting up himself for the very grace of God to despise the rest. By which fault that other Pharisee both gave thanks unto God for the goods which he had, and yet vaunted himself above the Publican confessing his sins. What therefore should a virgin do, what should she think, that she vaunt not herself above those, men or women, who have not this so great gift? For she ought not to feign humility, but to set it forth: for the feigning of humility is greater pride. Wherefore Scripture wishing to show that humility ought to be true, after having said, “By how much thou art great, by so much humble thyself in all things,” added soon after, “And thou shalt find grace before God:” assuredly where one could not humble one’s self deceitfully.

45. Wherefore what shall we say? is there any thought which a virgin of God may truly have, by reason of which she dare not to set herself before a faithful woman, not only a widow, but even married? I say not a reprobate virgin; for who knows not that an obedient woman is to be set before a disobedient virgin? But where both are obedient unto the commands of God, shall she so tremble to prefer holy virginity even to chaste marriage, and continence to wedded life, the fruit an hundred-fold to go before the thirty-fold? Nay, let her not doubt to prefer this thing to that thing; yet let not this or that virgin, obeying and fearing God, dare to set herself before this or that woman, obeying and fearing God; otherwise she will not be humble, and “God resisteth the proud!” What, therefore, shall she have in her thoughts? Forsooth the hidden gifts of God, which nought save the questioning of trial makes known to each, even in himself. For, to pass over the rest, whence doth a virgin know, although careful of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord but that haply, by reason of some weakness of mind unknown to herself, she be not as yet ripe for martyrdom, whereas that woman, whom she rejoiced to set herself before, may already be able to drink the Cup of the Lord’s humiliation, which He set before His disciples, to drink first, when enamored of high place? Whence, I say, doth she know but that she herself be not as yet Thecla, that other be already Crispina. Certainly unless there be present trial, there takes place no proof of this gift.

46. But this is so great, that certain understand it to be the fruit an hundred-fold. For the authority of the Church bears a very conspicuous witness, in which it is known to the faithful in what place the Martyrs, in what place the holy nuns deceased, are rehearsed at the Sacraments of the Altar. But what the meaning is of that difference of fruitfulness, let them see to it, who understand these things better than we; whether the virginal life be in fruit an hundred-fold, in sixty-fold the widowed, in thirty-fold the married; or whether the hundred-fold fruitfulness be ascribed unto martyrdom, the sixty-fold unto continence, the thirty-fold unto marriage; or whether virginity, by the addition of martyrdom, fill up the hundred-fold, but when alone be in sixty-fold, but married persons bearing thirty-fold arrive at sixty-fold, in case they shall be martyrs: or whether, what seems to me more probable, forasmuch as the gifts of Divine grace are many, and one is greater and better than another, whence the Apostle says, “But emulate ye

the better gifts;" we are to understand that they are more in number than to allow of being distributed under those different kinds. In the first place, that we set not widowed continence either as bearing no fruit, or set it but level with the desert of married charity, or equal it unto virgin glory; or think that the Crown of Martyrdom, either established in habit of mind, although proof of trial be wanting, or in actual making trial of suffering, be added unto either one of those these chastities, without any increase of fruitfulness. Next, when we set it down that many men and women so keep virginal chastity, as that yet they do not the things which the Lord saith, "If thou wilt to be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast, and give unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come, follow me;" and dare not unite themselves to those dwelling together, among whom no one saith that any thing is his own, but all things are unto them common; do we think that there is no addition of fruitfulness unto the virgins of God, when they do this? or that the virgins of God are without any fruit, although they do not this? Therefore there are many gifts, and some brighter and higher than others, each than each. And at times one is fruitful in fewer gifts, but better; another in lower gifts, but more. And in what manner they be either made equal one to another, or distinguished one from another, in receiving eternal honors, who of men would dare to pronounce? whereas yet it is plain both that those differences are many, and that the better are profitable not for the present time, but for eternity. But I judge that the Lord willed to make mention of three differences of fruitfulness, the rest He left to such as understand. For also another Evangelist hath made mention only of the hundred-fold: we are not, therefore, are we, to think that he either rejected, or knew not of, the other two, but rather that he left them to be understood?

47. But, as I had begun to say, whether the fruit an hundred-fold be virginity dedicated to God, or whether we are to understand that interval of fruitfulness in some other way, either such as we have made mention of, or such as we have not made mention of; yet no one, as I suppose, will have dared to prefer virginity to martyrdom, and no one will have doubted that this latter gift is hidden, if trial to test it be wanting. A virgin, therefore, hath a subject for thought, such as may be of profit to her for the keeping of humility, that she violate not that charity, which is above all gifts, without which assuredly whatever other gifts she shall have had, whether few or

many, whether great or small, she is nothing. She hath, I say, a subject for thought, that she be not puffed up, that she rival not; forsooth that she so make profession that the virginal good is much greater and better than the married good, as that yet she know not whether this or that married woman be not already able to suffer for Christ, but herself as yet unable, and she herein spared, that her weakness is not put to the question by trial. "For God," saith the Apostle, "is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tried above what ye are able but will make with the trial a way out, that ye may be able to bear it." Perhaps, therefore, those men or women keeping a way of married life praiseworthy in its kind, are already able, against an enemy forcing to unrighteousness, to contend even by tearing in pieces of bowels, and shedding of blood; but these men or women, continent from childhood, and making themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, still are not as yet able to endure such, either for righteousness, or for chastity itself. For it is one thing, for truth and an holy purpose, not to consent unto one who would persuade and flatter, but another thing not to yield even to one who tortures and strikes. These lie hid in the powers and strength of souls, by trial they are unfolded, by actual essay they come forth. In order, therefore, that each be not puffed up by reason of that, which he sees clearly that he can do, let him humbly consider that he knows not that there is perchance something more excellent which he cannot do, but that some, who neither have nor profess that of which he is lawfully self-conscious, are able to do this, which he himself cannot do. Thus will be kept, not by feigned but by true humility, "In honor preventing one another," and, "esteeming each the other higher than himself."

48. What now shall I say concerning the very carefulness and watchfulness against sin? "Who shall boast that he hath a chaste heart? or who shall boast that he is clean from sin?" Holy virginity is indeed inviolate from the mother's womb; but "no one," saith he, "is clean in Thy sight, not even the infant whose life is of one day upon the earth." There is kept also in faith inviolate a certain virginal chastity, whereby the Church is joined as a chaste virgin unto One Husband: but That One Husband hath taught, not only the faithful who are virgin in mind and body, but all Christians altogether, from spiritual even unto carnal, from Apostles even unto the last penitents, as though from the height of heaven even unto the bounds of it, to

pray, and in the prayer itself hath admonished them to say, “And forgive us our debts, even as we also forgive our debtors.” where, by this which we seek, He shews what also we should remember that we are. For neither on behalf of those debts, which for our whole past life we trust have been forgiven unto us in Baptism through His peace, hath He charged us to pray, saying, “And forgive us our debts, even as we also forgive our debtors:” otherwise this were a prayer which Catechumens rather ought to pray up to the time of Baptism; but whereas it is what baptized persons pray, rulers and people, pastors and flocks; it is sufficiently shown that in this life, the whole of which is a trial, no one ought to boast himself as though free from all sins.

49. Wherefore also the virgins of God without blame indeed, “follow the Lamb whithersoever He shall have gone,” both the cleansing of sins being perfected, and virginity being kept, which, were it lost, could not return: but, because that same Apocalypse itself, wherein such unto one such were revealed, in this also praises them, that “in their mouth there was not found a lie:” let them remember in this also to be true, that they dare not say that they have not sin. Forsooth the same John, who saw that, hath said this, “If we shall have said that we have not sin, we deceive our own selves, and the truth is not in us; but if we shall have confessed our faults, He is faithful and just, so as to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But if we shall have said that we have not sinned, we shall make Him a liar, and His word shall not be in us.” This surely is not said unto these or those, but unto all Christians, wherein virgins also ought to recognize themselves. For thus they shall be without a lie, such as in the Apocalypse they appeared. And by this means so long as there is not as yet perfection in heavenly height, confession in lowliness maketh them without blame.

50. But, again, lest by occasion of this sentence, any one should sin with deadly security, and should allow himself to be carried away, as though his sins were soon by easy confession to be blotted out, he straightway added, “My little children, these things have I written unto you, that ye sin not; and, if one shall have sinned, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and Himself is a propitiation of our sins.” Let no one

therefore depart from sin as though about to return to it, nor bind himself as it were by compact of alliance of this kind with unrighteousness, so as to take delight rather to confess it than to shun it. But, forasmuch as even upon such as are busy and on the watch not to sin, there creep by stealth, in a certain way, from human weakness, sins, however small, however few, yet not none; these same themselves become great and grievous, in case pride shall have added to them increase and weight: but by the Priest, Whom we have in the heavens, if by pious humility they be destroyed, they are with all ease cleansed.

51. But I contend not with those, who assert that a man can in this life live without any sin: I contend not, I gainsay not. For perhaps we take measure of the great from out our own misery, and, comparing ourselves with ourselves, understand not. One thing I know, that those great ones, such as we are not, such as we have not as yet made proof of, by how much they are great, by so much humble themselves in all things, that they may find grace before God. For, let them be how great soever they will, “there is no servant greater than his Lord, nor disciple greater than his master.” And assuredly He is the Lord, Who saith, “All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father;” and He is the Master, Who saith, “Come unto Me, all ye who labor, and learn of Me;” and yet what learn we? “In that I am meek,” saith He, “and lowly of heart.”

52. Here some one will say, This is now not to write of virginity, but of humility. As though truly it were any kind of virginity, and not that which is after God, which we had undertaken to set forth. And this good, by how much I see it to be great, by so much I fear for it, lest it be lost, the thief pride. Therefore there is none that guardeth the virginal good, save God Himself Who gave it: and God is Charity. The Guardian therefore of virginity is Charity: but the place of this Guardian is humility. There forsooth He dwelleth, Who said, that on the lowly and quiet, and that trembleth at His words, His Spirit resteth. What, therefore, have I done foreign from my purpose, if wishing the good, which I have praised, to be more securely guarded, I have taken care also to prepare a place for the Guardian? For I speak with confidence, nor have I any fear lest they be angry with me, whom I admonish with care to fear for themselves together

with me. More easily do follow the Lamb, although not whithersoever He shall have gone, yet so far as they shall have had power, married persons who are humble, than virgins who are proud. For how doth one follow Him, unto Whom one wills not to approach or how doth one approach Him, unto Whom one comes not to learn, “in that I am meek and lowly of heart?” Wherefore those the Lamb leadeth following whithersoever He shall have gone, in whom first Himself shall have found where to lay His Head. For also a certain proud and crafty person had said to Him, “Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou shalt have gone;” to whom He made answer, “Foxes have dens, and fowls of heaven nests: but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head.” By the term of foxes He reproveth wily craftiness, and by the name of birds puffed-up arrogance, wherein He found not pious humility to rest in. And by this no where at all did he follow the Lord, who had promised that he would follow Him, not unto a certain point of progress, but altogether whithersoever He should have gone.

53. Wherefore this do ye, virgins of God, this do ye: follow ye the Lamb, whithersoever He shall have gone. But first come unto Him, Whom ye are to follow, and learn, in that He is meek and lowly of heart. Come ye in lowly wise unto the Lowly, if ye love: and depart not from Him, lest ye fall. For whoso fears to depart from Him asks and says, “Let there not come to me foot of pride.” Go on in the way of loftiness with the foot of lowliness; Himself lifteth up such as follow in lowly wise, Who thought it not a trouble to come down unto such as lay low. Commit ye His gifts unto Him to keep, “guard ye your strength unto Him.” Whatever of evil through His guardianship ye commit not, account as forgiven unto you by Him: lest, thinking that you have little forgiven unto you, ye love little, and with ruinous boasting despise the publicans beating their breasts. Concealing that strength of yours which hath been tried beware, that ye be not puffed up, because ye have been able to bear something: but concerning that which hath been untried pray, that ye be not tempted above that ye are able to bear. Think that some are superior to you in secret, than whom ye are openly better. When the good things of others, haply unknown to you, are kindly believed by you, your own that are known to you are not lessened by comparison, but strengthened by love: and what haply as yet are wanting, are by so much the more easily given, by how much they are the more

humbly desired. Let such among your number as persevere, afford to you an example: but let such as fall increase your fear. Love the one that ye may imitate it; mourn over the other, that ye be not puffed up. Do not ye establish your own righteousness; submit yourselves unto God Who justifies you. Pardon the sins of others, pray for your own: future sins shun by watching, past sins blot out by confessing.

54. Lo, already ye are such, as that in the rest of your conduct also ye correspond with the virginity which ye have professed and kept. Lo, already not only do ye abstain from murders, devilish sacrifices and abominations, thefts, rapines, frauds, perjuries, drunkennesses, and all luxury and avarice, hatreds, emulations, impieties, cruelties; but even those things, which either are, or are thought, lighter, are not found nor arise among you: not bold face, not wandering eyes, not unbridled tongue, not petulant laugh, not scurrilous jest, not unbecoming mien, not swelling or loose gait; already ye render not evil for evil, nor curse for curse; already, lastly, ye fulfill that measure of love, that ye lay down your lives for your brethren. Lo, already ye are such, because also such ye ought to be. These, being added to virginity, set forth an angelic life unto men, and the ways of heaven unto the earth. But, by how much ye are great, whosoever of you are so great, “by so much humble yourselves in all things, that ye may find grace before God,” that He resist you not as proud, that He humble you not as lifting up yourselves, that He lead you not through straits as being puffed up: although anxiety be unnecessary, that, where Charity glows, humility be not wanting.

55. If, therefore, ye despise marriages of sons of men, from which to beget sons of men, love ye with your whole heart Him, Who is fair of form above the sons of men; ye have leisure; your heart is free from marriage bonds. Gaze on the Beauty of your Lover: think of Him equal to the Father, made subject also to His Mother: ruling even in the heavens, and serving upon the earth: creating all things, created among all things. That very thing, which in Him the proud mock at, gaze on, how fair it is: with inward eyes gaze on the wounds of Him hanging, the scars of Him rising again, the blood of Him dying, the price of him that believes, the gain of Him that redeems. Consider of how great value these are, weigh them in the scales of Charity;



and whatever of love ye had to expend upon your marriages, pay back to Him.

56. It is well that He seeks your beauty within, where He hath given unto you power to become daughters of God: He seeks not of you a fair flesh, but fair conduct, whereby to bridle also the flesh. He is not one unto Whom any one can lie concerning you, and make him rage through jealousy. See with how great security ye love Him, Whom ye fear not to offend by false suspicions. Husband and wife love each other, in that they see each other: and what they see not, that they fear between themselves: nor have they sure delight in what is visible, while in what is concealed they usually suspect what is not. Ye in Him, Whom ye see not with the eyes, and behold by faith, neither have what is real to blame, nor fear lest haply ye offend Him by what is false. If therefore ye should owe great love to husbands, Him, for Whose sake ye would not have husbands, how greatly ought ye to love? Let Him be fixed in your whole heart, Who for you was fixed on the Cross: let Him possess in your soul all that, whatever it be, that ye would not have occupied by marriage. It is not lawful for you to love little Him, for Whose sake ye have not loved even what were lawful. So loving Him Who is meek and lowly of heart, I have no fear for you of pride.

57. Thus, after our small measure, we have spoken enough both of sanctity, whereby ye are properly called “sanctimoniales,” and of humility, whereby whatever great name ye bear is kept. But more worthily let those Three Children, unto whom He, Whom they loved with full glow of heart, afforded refreshing in the fire, admonish you concerning this our little work, much more shortly indeed in number of words, but much more greatly in weight of authority, in the Hymn wherein God is honored by them. For joining humility unto holiness in such as praise God, they have most plainly taught, that each, by how much he make any more holy profession, by so much do beware that he be not deceived by pride. Wherefore do ye also praise Him, Who grants unto you, that in the midst of the flames of this world, although ye be not joined in marriage, yet ye be not burned: and praying also for us, “Bless ye the Lord, ye holy and humble men of heart; utter an hymn, and exalt Him above all forever.”

# OF THE WORK OF MONKS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

DE OPERE MONACHORUM.

TRANSLATED BY REV. H. BROWNE, M.A. OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;  
LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESAN COLLEGE, CHICHESTER.

FROM THE RETRACTATIONS, II. 21.

To write the Book on the Work of Monks, the need which compelled me was this. When at Carthage there had begun to be monasteries, some maintained themselves by their own hands, obeying the Apostle; but others wished so to live on the oblations of the faithful, that doing no work whence they might either have or supply the necessities of life, they thought and boasted that they did rather fulfill the precept of the Gospel, where the Lord saith, Behold the fowls of heaven, and the lilies of the field, (Matt. vi. 26). Whence also among laics of inferior purpose, but yet fervent in zeal, there had begun to arise tumultuous contests, whereby the Church was troubled, some defending the one, others the other part. Add to this, that some of them who were for not working, wore their hair long. Whence contentions between those who reprehended and those who justified the practice, were, according to their party affections, increased. On these accounts the venerable old Aurelius, Bishop of the Church of the same city, desired me to write somewhat of this matter; and I did so. This Book begins, “Jussioni tuae, sancte frater Aureli.”

This work is placed in the Retractations next after that “On the Good of Marriage” which belongs to the year 401.

1. Thy bidding, holy brother Aurelius, it was meet that I should comply withal, with so much the more devotion, by how much the more it became clear unto me Who, out of thee, did speak that bidding. For our Lord Jesus Christ, dwelling in thine inner part, and inspiring into thee a solicitude of fatherly and brotherly charity, whether our sons and brothers the monks, who neglect to obey blessed Paul the Apostle, when he saith, "If any will not work, neither let him eat," are to have that license permitted unto them; He, assuming unto His work thy will and tongue, hath commanded me out of thee, that I should hereof write somewhat unto thee. May He therefore Himself be present with me also, that I may obey in such sort that from His gift, in the very usefulness of fruitful labor, I may understand that I am indeed obeying Him.

2. First then, it is to be seen, what is said by persons of that profession, who will not work: then, if we shall find that they think not aright, what is meet to be said for their correction? "It is not," say they, "of this corporal work in which either husbandmen or handicraftsmen labor, that the Apostle gave precept, when he said, If any will not work, neither let him eat." "For he could not be contrary to the Gospel, where the Lord Himself saith, "Therefore I say unto you, be not solicitous for your life, what ye shall eat, neither for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Consider the fowls of heaven, that they sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye rather of more worth than they? But who of you by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? And concerning raiment, why are ye solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they labor not, neither spin; but I say unto you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these. But if the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, God so clotheth; how much more you, (O ye) of little faith! Be not therefore solicitous, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clad? for all these things do the Gentiles seek. And your heavenly Father knoweth that ye need all these. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these shall be added unto you. Be not therefore solicitous for the morrow: for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Lo, say they, where the Lord biddeth us be without care

concerning our food and clothing: how then could the Apostle think contrary to the Lord, that he should instruct us that we ought to be in such sort solicitous, what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed, that he should even burden us with the arts, cares, labors of handicraftsmen? Wherefore in that he saith, “If any will not work, neither let him eat;” works spiritual, say they, are what we must understand: of which he saith in another place, “To each one according as the Lord hath given: I have planted, Apollos hath watered; but God gave the increase.” And a little after, “Each one shall receive his reward according to his own labor. We are God’s fellow-workers; God’s husbandry, God’s building are ye: according to the grace which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I have laid the foundation.” As therefore the Apostle worketh in planting, watering, building, and foundation-laying, in that way whoso will not work, let him not eat. For what profiteth in eating spiritually to be fed with the word of God, if he do not thence work others’ edification? As that slothful servant, what did it profit to receive a talent and to hide it, and not work for the Lord’s gain? Was it that it should be taken from him at last, and himself cast into outer darkness? So, say they, do we also. We read with the brethren, who come to us fatigued from the turmoil of the world, that with us, in the word of God, and in prayers, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, they may find rest. We speak to them, console, exhort, building up in them whatever unto their life, according to their degree, we perceive to be lacking. Such works if we wrought not, with peril should we receive of the Lord our spiritual sustenance itself. For this is it the Apostle said, “If any one will not work, neither let him eat.” Thus do these men deem themselves to comply with the apostolic and evangelic sentence, when both the Gospel they believe to have given precept concerning the not caring for the corporal and temporal indigence of this life, and the Apostle concerning spiritual work and food to have said, “If any will not work, neither let him eat.”

3. Nor do they attend to this, that if another should say, that the Lord indeed, speaking in parables and in similitudes concerning spiritual food and clothing, did warn that not on these accounts should His servants be solicitous; (as He saith, “When they shall drag you to judgment-seats, take no thought what ye shall speak. For it will be given you in that hour what ye

shall speak: but it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” For the discourse of spiritual wisdom is that for which He would not that they should take thought, promising that it should be given unto them, nothing solicitous thereof;) but the Apostle now, in manner Apostolical, more openly discoursing and more properly, than figuratively speaking, as is the case with much, indeed well-nigh all, in his Apostolic Epistles, said it properly of corporal work and food, “If any will not work, neither let him eat:” by those would their sentence be rendered doubtful, unless, considering the other words of the Lord, they should find somewhat whereby they might prove it to have been of not caring for corporal food and raiment that He spoke when He said, “Be not solicitous what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed.” As, if they should observe what He saith, “For all these things do the Gentiles seek;” for there He shows that it was of very corporal and temporal things that He spake. So then, were this the only thing that the Apostle has said on this subject, “If any will not work, neither let him eat;” these words might be drawn over to another meaning: but since in many other places of his Epistles, what is his mind on this point, he most openly teaches, they superfluously essay to raise a mist before themselves and others, that what that charity adviseth they may not only refuse to do, but even to understand it themselves, or let it be understood by others; not fearing that which is written, “He would not understand that he might do good.”

4. First then we ought to demonstrate that the blessed Apostle Paul willed the servants of God to work corporal works which should have as their end a great spiritual reward, for this purpose that they should need food and clothing of no man, but with their own hands should procure these for themselves: then, to show that those evangelical precepts from which some cherish not only their sloth but even arrogance, are not contrary to the Apostolical precept and example. Let us see then whence the Apostle came to this, that he should say, “If any will not work, neither let him eat,” and what he thereupon joineth on, that from the very context of this lesson may appear his declared sentence. “We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh unquietly, and not according to the tradition which they have received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us; for we

were not unquiet among you, neither ate we bread of any man for nought, but in labor and travail night and day working that we might not burden any of you: not for that we have not power, but that we might give ourselves as a pattern to you in which ye should imitate us. For also when we were with you, we gave you this charge, that if any will not work, let him not eat. For we have heard that certain among you walk unquietly, working not at all, but being busy-bodies. Now them that are such we charge and beseech in our Lord Jesus Christ, that with silence they work, and eat their own bread.” What can be said to these things, since, that none might thereafter have license to interpret this according to his wish, not according to charity, he by his own example hath taught what by precept he hath enjoined? To him, namely, as to an Apostle, a preacher of the Gospel, a soldier of Christ, a planter of the vineyard, a shepherd of the flock had the Lord appointed that he should live by the Gospel; and yet himself exacted not the pay which was his due, that he might make himself a pattern to them which desired what was not their due; as he saith to the Corinthians, “Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and of its fruit eateth not? Who feedeth a flock, and of the milk of the flock partaketh not?” Therefore, what was due to him, he would not receive, that by his example they might be checked, who, although not so ordained in the Church, did deem the like to be due to themselves. For what is it that he saith, “Neither ate we bread of any man for naught, but in labor and travail night and day working that we might not burden any of you; not for that we have not power, but that we might give ourselves as a pattern to you wherein ye should follow us?” Let them, therefore, hear to whom he hath given this precept, that is, they which have not this power which he had, to wit, that while only spiritually working they should eat bread by corporal labor not earned: and as he says, “We charge and beseech in Christ that with silence they work and eat their own bread,” let them not dispute against the most manifest words of the Apostle, because this also pertaineth to that “silence” with which they ought to work and eat their own bread.

5. I would, however, proceed to a more searching and diligent consideration and handling of these words, had I not other places of his Epistles much more manifest, by comparing which, both these are made more clearly manifest, and if these were not in existence, those others would suffice. To

the Corinthians, namely, writing of this same thing, he saith thus, “Am I not free? am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen Christ Jesus our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? If to others I am not an Apostle, to you assuredly I am. For the seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord. My defense to them which interrogate me is this. Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a woman who is a sister, as also the other Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?” See how first he shows what is lawful to him, and therefore lawful for that he is an Apostle. For with that he began, “Am I not free? am I not an Apostle?” and proves himself to be an Apostle, saying, “Have I not seen Christ Jesus our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord?” Which being proved, he shows that to be lawful to him which was so to the other Apostles; that is, that he should not work with his hands, but live by the Gospel, as the Lord appointed, which in what follows he has most openly demonstrated; for to this end did also faithful women which had earthly substance go with them, and minister unto them of their substance, that they might lack none of those things which pertain to the necessities of this life. Which thing blessed Paul demonstrates to be lawful indeed unto himself, as also the other Apostles did it, but that he had not chosen to use this power he afterwards mentions. This thing some not understanding, have interpreted not “a woman which is a sister,” when he said, “Have we not power to lead about a sister a woman;” but, “a sister a wife.” They were misled by the ambiguity of the Greek word, because both “wife” and “woman” is expressed in Greek by the same word. Though indeed the Apostle has so put this that they ought not to have made this mistake; for that he neither says “a woman” merely, but “a sister woman;” nor “to take” (as in marriage), but “to take about” (as on a journey). Howbeit other interpreters have not been misled by this ambiguity, and they have interpreted “woman” not “wife.”

6. Which thing whoso thinks cannot have been done by the Apostles, that with them women of holy conversation should go about wheresoever they preached the Gospel, that of their substance they might minister to their necessities, let him hear the Gospel, and learn how in this they did after the example of the Lord Himself. Our Lord, namely, according to the wont of His pity, sympathizing with the weak, albeit Angels might minister unto Him, had both a bag in which should be put the money which was bestowed

doubtless by good and believing persons, as necessary for their living, (which bag He gave in charge to Judas, that even thieves, if we could not keep clear of such, we might learn to tolerate in the Church. He, namely, as is written of him, “stole what was put therein:”) and He willed that women should follow Him for the preparing and ministering what was necessary, showing what was due to evangelists and ministers of God as soldiers, from the people of God as the provincials; so that if any should not choose to use that which is due unto him, as Paul the Apostle did not choose, he might bestow the more upon the Church, by not exacting the pay which was due to him, but by earning his daily living of his own labors. For it had been said to the inn-keeper to whom that wounded man was brought, “Whatever thou layest out more, at my coming again I will repay thee.” The Apostle Paul, then, did “lay out more,” in that he, as himself witnesseth, did at his own charges go a warfare. In the Gospel, namely, it is written, “Thereafter also Himself was making a journey through cities and villages preaching and evangelizing of the kingdom of God; and the twelve with Him, and certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary who is called Magdalene, out of whom seven devils had gone forth, and Joanna wife of Chuza Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, who ministered unto Him of their substance.” This example of the Lord the Apostles did imitate, to receive the meat which was due unto them; of which the same Lord most openly speaketh: “As ye go,” saith He, “preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out devils. Freely have ye received, freely give. Possess not gold nor silver nor money in your purses, neither scrip on your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, neither staff: for the workman is worthy of his meat.” Lo, where the Lord appointeth the very thing which the Apostle doth mention. For to this end He told them not to carry all those things, namely, that where need should be, they might receive them of them unto whom they preached the kingdom of God.

7. But lest any should fancy that this was granted only to the twelve, see also what Luke relateth: “After these things,” saith he, “the Lord chose also other seventy and two, and sent them by two and two before His face into every city and place whither He was about to come. And He said unto them, The harvest indeed is plentiful, but the laborers few: ask ye therefore the



Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry neither purse nor scrip nor shoes, and salute no man by the way. Into whatsoever house ye shall enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him: if not, it shall return to you. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as are with them: for the workman is worthy of his hire.” Here it appears that these things were not commanded, but permitted, that whoso should choose to use, might use that which was lawful unto him by the Lord’s appointment; but if any should not choose to use it, he would not do contrary to a thing commanded, but would be yielding up his own right, by demeaning himself more mercifully and laboriously in the Gospel in the which he would not accept even the hire which was his due. Otherwise the Apostle did contrary to a command of the Lord: for, after he had shown it to be lawful unto him, he hath straightway subjoined, “But yet have I not used this power.”

8. But let us return to the order of our discourse, and the whole of the passage itself of the Epistle let us diligently consider. “Have we not,” saith he, “leave to eat and to drink? have we not leave to lead about a woman, a sister?” What leave meant he, but what the Lord gave unto them whom He sent to preach the kingdom of heaven, saying, “Those things which are (given) of them, eat ye; for the workman is worthy of his hire;” and proposing Himself as an example of the same power, to Whom most faithful women did of their means minister such necessities? But the Apostle Paul hath done more, from his fellow-Apostles alleging a proof of this license permitted of the Lord. For not as finding fault hath he subjoined, “As do also the other Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas;” but that hence he might show that this which he would not accept was a thing which, that it was lawful for him to accept was proved by the wont of the rest also his fellow-soldiers. “Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?” Lo, he hath taken away all doubt even from the slowest hearts, that they may understand of what working he speaks. For to what end saith he, “Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?” but for that all evangelists and ministers of God’s word had power received of the Lord, not to work with their hands, but to live by

the Gospel, working only spiritual works in preaching of the kingdom of heaven and edifying of the peace of the Church? For no man can say that it is of that very spiritual working that the Apostle said, "Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?" For this power to forbear working all those had: let him say then, who essays to deprave and pervert precepts Apostolical; let him say, if he dares that all evangelists received of the Lord power to forbear preaching the Gospel. But if this is most absurd and mad to say, why will they not understand what is plain to all, that they did indeed receive power not to work, but works bodily, whereby to get a living, because "the workman is worthy of his hire," as the Gospel speaks. It is not therefore that Paul and Barnabas only had not power to forbear working; but that all alike had this power of which these availed not themselves in "laying out more" upon the Church; so as in those places where they preached the Gospel they judged to be meet for the weak. And for this reason, that he might not seem to have found fault with his fellow-Apostles, he goes on to say: "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who feedeth a flock, and of the milk of the flock partaketh not? Speak I these things as a man? Saith not the Law the same? For in the law of Moses it is written, Thou shall not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God care for oxen? Or saith he it for our sake altogether? For our sakes truly is it written, because he that plougheth ought to plough in hope, and he that thresheth in hope of partaking of the fruits." By these words the Apostle Paul sufficiently indicates, that it was no usurping unto themselves of aught beyond their due on the part of his fellow-Apostles, that they wrought not bodily, whence they might have the things which to this life are necessary, but as the Lord ordained, should, living by the Gospel, eat bread gratuitously given of them unto whom they were preaching a gratuitous grace. Their charges, namely, they did like soldiers receive, and of the fruit of the vineyard by them planted, they did, as need was, freely gather; and of the milk of the flock which they fed, they drank; and of the threshing-floor on which they threshed, they took their meat.

9. But he speaks more openly in the rest which he subjoins, and altogether removes all causes of doubting. "If we unto you," saith he, "have sown spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?" What are the spiritual things which he sowed, but the word and mystery of

the sacrament of the kingdom of heaven? And what the carnal things which he saith he had a right to reap, but these temporal things which are indulged to the life and indigency of the flesh? These however being due to him he declares that he had not sought nor accepted, lest he should cause any impediment to the Gospel of Christ. What work remaineth for us to understand him to have wrought, whereby he should get his living, but bodily work, with his own bodily and visible hands? For if from spiritual work he sought food and clothing, that is, to receive these of them whom he was edifying in the Gospel, he could not, as he does, go on to say, "If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this power, but tolerate all things that we may not cause any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ." What power doth he say he had not used, but that which he had over them, received of the Lord, the power to reap their carnal things, in order to the sustenance of this life which is lived in the flesh? Of which power were others also partakers, who did not at the first announce the Gospel to them, but came thereafter to their Church preaching the self-same. Therefore, when he had said, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?" he subjoined, "If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?" And when he had demonstrated what power they had: "Nevertheless we have not used," saith he, "this power; but we put up with all things, lest we should cause any impediment to the Gospel of Christ." Let therefore these persons say in what way from spiritual work the Apostle had carnal food, when himself openly says that he had not used this power. But if from spiritual work he had not carnal food, it remains that from bodily work he had it and thereof saith, "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us. All things," saith he, "we suffer, lest we cause any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ."

10. And he comes back again, and in all ways, over and over again, enforceth what he hath the right to do, yet doeth not. "Do ye not know," saith he, "that they which work in the temple, eat of the things which are in the temple? they which serve the altar, have their share with the altar? So hath the Lord ordained for them which preach the Gospel, to live of the

Gospel. But I have used none of these things.” What more open than this? what more clear? I fear lest haply, while I discourse wishing to expound this, that become obscure which in itself is bright and clear. For they who understand not these words, or feign not to understand, do much less understand mine, or profess to understand: unless perchance they do therefore quickly understand ours, because it is allowed them to deride them being understood; but concerning the Apostle’s words this same is not allowed. For this reason, where they cannot interpret them otherwise according to their own sentence, be it ever so clear and manifest, they answer that it is obscure and uncertain because wrong and perverse they dare not call it. Cries the man of God, “The Lord hath ordained for them which preach the Gospel, of this Gospel to live; but I have used none of these things;” and flesh and blood essayeth to make crooked what is straight; what open, to shut; what serene, to cloud over. “It was,” saith it, “spiritual work that he was doing, and thereof did he live.” If it be so, of the Gospel did he live: why then doth he say, “The Lord hath ordained for them which preach the Gospel, of the Gospel to live; but I have used none of these things?” Or if this very word, “to live” which is here used, they will needs also interpret in respect of spiritual life, then had the Apostle no hope towards God, in that he did not live by the Gospel, because he hath said, “I have used none of these things.” Wherefore, that he should have certain hope of life eternal the Apostle did of the Gospel in any wise spiritually live. What therefore he saith, “But I have used none of these things,” doth without doubt make to be understood of this life which is in the flesh, that which he hath said of the Lord’s ordaining to them which preach the Gospel, that of the Gospel they should live; that is, this life which hath need of food and clothing, they by the Gospel shall sustain; as above he said of his fellow-apostles; of whom the Lord Himself saith, “The workman is worthy of his meat;” and, “The workman is worthy of his hire.” This meat, then, and this hire of the sustenance of this life, due to evangelists, this of them to whom he evangelized the Apostle accepted not, saying a true thing, “I have used none of these things.”

11. And he goes on, and adjoins, lest perchance any should imagine that he only therefore received not, because they had not given: “But I have not written these things that they may be so done unto me: good is it for me

rather to die than that any make void my glory.” What glory, unless that which he wished to have with God, while in Christ suffering with the weak? As he is presently about to say most openly; “For if I shall have preached the Gospel, there is not to me any glory: for necessity is laid upon me;” that is, of sustaining this life. “For woe will be to me,” he saith, “if I preach not the Gospel.” that is, to my own will shall I forbear to preach the Gospel, because I shall be tormented with hunger, and shall not have whereof to live. For he goes on, and says; “For if willingly I do this, I have a reward.” By his doing it willingly, he means, if he do it uncompelled by any necessity of supporting this present life; and for this he hath reward, to wit, with God, of glory everlasting. “But if unwilling,” saith he, “a dispensation is entrusted unto me:” that is, if being unwilling, I am by necessity of passing through this present life, compelled to preach the Gospel, “a dispensation is entrusted unto me;” to wit, that by my dispensation as a steward, because Christ, because the truth, is that which I preach, howsoever because of occasion, howsoever seeking mine own, howsoever by necessity of earthly emolument compelled so to do, other men do profit, but I have not that glorious and everlasting reward with God. “What then,” saith he, “shall be my reward?” He saith it as asking a question: therefore the pronunciation must be suspended, until he give the answer. Which the more easily to understand, let, as it were, us put the question to him, “What, then, will be thy reward, O Apostle, when that earthly reward due to good evangelists, not for its sake evangelizing, but yet taking it as the consequence and offered to them by the Lord’s appointment, thou acceptest not? What shall be thy reward then?” See what he replies: “That, preaching the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge;” that is, that the Gospel may not be to believers expensive, lest they account that for this end is the Gospel to be preached to them, that its preachers should seem as it were to sell it. And yet he comes back again and again, that he may show what, by warrant of the Lord, he hath a right unto, yet doeth not: “that I abuse not,” saith he, “my power in the Gospel.”

12. But now, that as bearing with the infirmity of men he did this, let us hear what follows: “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. To them that are under the law, I became as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the

law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.” Which thing he did, not with craftiness of simulation, but with mercy of compassion with others; that is, not as if to feign himself a Jew, as some have thought, in that he observed at Jerusalem the things prescribed by the old law. For he did this in accordance with his free and openly declared sentence, in which he says, “Is any called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised.” That is, let him not so live, as though he had become uncircumcised, and covered that which he had laid bare: as in another place he saith, “Thy circumcision is become uncircumcision.” It was in accordance then with this his sentence, in which he saith, “Is any called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised;” that he did those things, in which, by persons not understanding and not enough attending, he has been accounted to have feigned. For he was a Jew, and was called being circumcised; therefore he would not become uncircumcised; that is, would not so live as if he had not been circumcised. For this he now had in his power to do. And “under” the law, indeed, he was not as they who servilely wrought it; but yet “in” the law of God and of Christ. For that law was not one, and the law of God another, as accursed Manicheans are wont to say. Otherwise, if when he did those things he is to be accounted to have feigned, then he feigned himself also a pagan, and sacrificed to idols, because he says that he became to those without law, as without law. By whom, doubtless, he would have us to understand no other than Gentiles whom we call Pagans. It is one thing therefore to be under the law, another in the law, another without law. “Under the law,” the carnal Jews; “in the law,” spiritual men, both Jews and Christians; (whence the former kept that custom of their fathers, but did not impose unwonted burdens upon the believing Gentiles; and therefore they also were circumcised;) but “without law,” are the Gentiles which have not yet believed, to whom yet the Apostle testifieth himself to have become like, through sympathy of a merciful heart, not simulation of a changeable exterior; that is, that he might in that way succor carnal Jew or Pagan, in which way himself, if he were that, would have wished to be succored: bearing, to wit, their infirmity, in likeness of compassion, not deceiving in fiction of lying; as he straightway goes on, and says, “I became to the weak as weak, that I might gain the

weak.” For it was from this point that he was speaking, in saying all those other things. As then, that he became to the weak as weak, was no lie; so all those other things above rehearsed. For what doth he mean his weakness towards the weak to have been, but that of suffering with them, insomuch that, lest he should appear to be a seller of the Gospel, and by falling into an ill suspicion with ignorant men, should hinder the course of God’s word, he would not accept what by warrant of the Lord was his due? Which if he were willing to accept, he would not in any wise lie, because it was truly due to him; and for that he would not, he did not in any wise lie. For he did not say, it was not due; but he showed it to be due, and that being due he had not used it, and professed that he would not at all use it, in that very thing becoming weak; namely, in that he would not use his power; being, to wit, with so merciful affection endued, that he thought in what way he should wish to be dealt withal, if himself also were made so weak, that possibly, if he should see them by whom the Gospel was preached to him, accepting their charges, he might think it a bringing of wares to market, and hold them in suspicion accordingly.

13. Of this weakness of his, he saith in another place, “We made ourselves small among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.” For in that passage the context indicates this: “For neither at any time,” saith he, “used we flattering words, as ye know, nor an occasion of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others when we might have been burdensome to you as the Apostles of Christ: but we made ourselves small among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.” What therefore he saith to the Corinthians, that he had power of his apostleship, as also the other Apostles, which power he testifieth that he had not used; this also he saith in that place to the Thessalonians, “When we might have been burdensome to you as Christ’s Apostles:” according to that the Lord saith, “The workman is worthy of his hire.” For that of this he speaks, is indicated by that which he above set down, “Neither for occasion of covetousness, God is witness.” By reason, namely, of this which by right of the Lord’s appointment was due to good evangelists, who not for its sake do evangelize but seek the kingdom of God, so that all these things should be added unto them, others were taking advantage thereof, of whom he also saith, “For they that are such serve not God, but their own belly.”

From whom the Apostle wished so to cut off this occasion, that even what was justly due to him, he would forego. For this himself doth openly show in the second to the Corinthians, speaking of other Churches supplying his necessities. For he had come, as it appears, to so great indigence, that from distant Churches were sent supplies for his necessities, while yet from them among whom he was, he accepted nothing of that kind. "Have I committed a sin," saith he, "in humbling myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the Gospel of God freely? Other Churches I despoiled, taking wages of them to minister unto you: and when I was present with you and wanted, to no man was I burdensome. For that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied, and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome to you, and will keep myself. It is the truth of Christ in me, that this glory shall not be infringed in me in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, I also mean to do, that I may cut off occasion from them which seek occasion, that wherein they glory they may be found as also we." Of this occasion, therefore, which he here saith that he cuts off, he would have that understood which he saith in the former place, "Neither for occasion of covetousness, God is witness." And what he here saith, "In humbling myself that ye might be exalted:" this in the first to the same Corinthians, "I became to the weak as weak;" this to the Thessalonians, "I became small among you, as a nurse cherisheth her children." Now then observe what follows: "So," saith he, "being affectionately desirous of you, we are minded to impart unto you not alone the Gospel of God, but our own souls also; because ye are become most dear to us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and toil, night and day working, that we might not burden any of you." For this he said above, "When we might be burdensome to you, as Christ's Apostles." Because, then, the weak were in peril, lest, agitated by false suspicions, they should hate an, as it were, venal Gospel, for this cause, trembling for them as with a father's and a mother's bowels of compassion, did he this thing. So too in the Acts of the Apostles he speaks the same thing, when, sending from Miletus to Ephesus, he had called thence the presbyters of the Church, to whom, among much else, "Silver," saith he, "and gold, or apparel of no man have I coveted; yourselves know, that to my necessities and theirs who were with me these hands have ministered. In all things have I shown you



that so laboring it behoveth to help the weak, mindful also of the words of the Lord Jesus, for that He said, More blessed is it rather to give than to receive.”

14. Here peradventure some man may say, “If it was bodily work that the Apostle wrought, whereby to sustain this life, what was that same work, and when did he find time for it, both to work and to preach the Gospel?” To whom I answer: Suppose I do not know; nevertheless that he did bodily work, and thereby lived in the flesh, and did not use the power which the Lord had given to the Apostles, that preaching the Gospel he should live by the Gospel, those things above-said do without all doubt bear witness. For it is not either in one place or briefly said, that it should be possible for any most astute arguer with all his tergiversation to traduce and pervert it to another meaning. Since then so great an authority, with so mighty and so frequent blows mauling the gainsayers, doth break in pieces their contrariness, why ask they of me either what sort of work he did, or when he did it? One thing I know, that he neither did steal, nor was a housebreaker or highwayman, nor chariot-driver or hunter or player, nor given to filthy lucre: but innocently and honestly wrought things which are fitted for the uses of men; such as are the works of carpenters, builders, shoemakers, peasants, and such like. For honesty itself reprehends not what their pride doth reprehend, who love to be called, but love not to be, honest. The Apostle then would not disdain either to take in hand any work of peasants, or to be employed in the labor of craftsmen. For he who saith, “Be ye without offense to Jews and to Greeks and to the Church of God,” before what men he could possibly stand abashed, I know not. If they shall say, the Jews; the Patriarchs fed cattle: if the Greeks, whom we call also Pagans; they have had philosophers, held in high honor, who were shoemakers: if the Church of God; that just man, elect to the testimony of a conjugal and ever-during virginity, to whom was betrothed the Virgin Mary who bore Christ, was a carpenter. Whatever therefore of these with innocence and without fraud men do work, is good. For the Apostle himself takes precaution of this, that no man through necessity of sustaining life should turn aside to evil works. “Let him that stole,” saith he, “steal no more; but rather let him labor good with his hands, that he may have to impart to him

that needeth.” This then is enough to know, that also in the very work of the body the Apostle did work that which is good.

15. But when he might use to work, that is, in what spaces of time, that he might not be hindered from preaching the Gospel, who can make out? Though, truly, that he wrought at hours of both day and night himself hath not left untold. Yet these men truly, who as though very full of business and occupation inquire about the time of working, what do they? Have they from Jerusalem round about even to Illyricum filled the lands with the Gospel? or whatever of barbarian nations hath remained yet to be gone unto, and to be filled of the peace of the Church, have they undertaken? We know them into a certain holy society, most leisurely gathered together. A marvellous thing did the Apostle, that in very deed amid his so great care of all the Churches, both planted and to be planted, to his care and labor appertaining, he did also with his hands work: yet on that account, when he was with the Corinthians, and wanted, was burdensome to no man of those among whom he was, but altogether that which was lacking to him the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied.

16. For he himself also, with an eye to the like necessities of saints, who, although they obey his precepts, “that with silence they work and eat their own bread,” may yet from many causes stand in need of somewhat by way of supplement to the like sustenance, therefore, after he had thus said, teaching and premonishing, “Now them which are such we command and beseech in our Lord Jesus Christ, that with silence they work and eat their own bread;” yet, lest they which had whereof they might supply the needs of the servants of God, should hence take occasion to wax lazy, providing against this he hath straightway added, “But ye, brethren, become not weak in showing beneficence.” And when he was writing to Titus, saying, “Zenas the lawyer and Apollos do thou diligently send forward, that nothing may be wanting to them;” that he might show from what quarter nothing ought to be wanting to them, he straightway subjoined, “But let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary use, that they be not unfruitful.” In the case of Timothy also, whom he calls his own most true son, because he knew him weak of body, (as he shows, in advising him not to drink water, but to use a little wine for his stomach’s sake and his often infirmities,) lest

then haply, because in bodily work he could not labor, he being unwilling to stand in need of daily food at their hands, unto whom he ministered the Gospel, should seek some business in which the stress of his mind would become entangled; (for it is one thing to labor in body, with the mind free, as does a handicraftsman, if he be not fraudulent and avaricious and greedy of his own private gain; but another thing, to occupy the mind itself with cares of collecting money without the body's labor, as do either dealers, or bailiffs, or undertakers, for these with care of the mind conduct their business, not with their hands do work, and in that regard occupy their mind itself with solicitude of getting;) lest then Timothy should fall upon such like ways, because from weakness of body he could not work with his hands, he thus exhorts, admonishes, and comforts him: "Labor," saith he, "as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man, going a warfare for God, entangleth himself with secular business; that he may please Him to whom he hath proved himself. For he that striveth for masteries, is not crowned except he strive lawfully." Hereupon, lest the other should be put to straits, saying, "Dig I cannot, to beg I am ashamed," he adjoined, "The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits:" according to that which he had said to the Corinthians, "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth a flock, and partaketh not of the milk of the flock?" Thus did he make to be without care a chaste evangelist, not to that end working as an evangelist that he might sell the Gospel, but yet not, having strength to supply unto himself with his own hands the necessities of this life; for that he should understand whatever being necessary for himself he was taking of them whom as provincials he as a soldier was serving, and whom as a vineyard he was culturing, or as a flock was feeding, to be not matter of mendicity, but of power.

17. On account then of these either occupations of the servants of God, or bodily infirmities, which cannot be altogether wanting, not only doth the Apostle permit the needs of saints to be supplied by good believers, but also most wholesomely exhorteth. For, setting apart that power, which he saith himself had not used, which yet that the faithful must serve unto, he enjoins, saying, "Let him that is catechised in the word, communicate unto him that doth catechise him, in all good things:" setting apart, then, this

power, which that the preachers of the word have over them to whom they preach, he often testifieth; speaking, moreover, of the saints who had sold all that they had and distributed the same, and were dwelling at Jerusalem in an holy communion of life, not saying that any thing was their own, to whom all things were in common, and their soul and heart one in the Lord: that these by the Churches of the Gentiles should have what they needed bestowed upon them, he chargeth and exhorteth. Thence is also that to the Romans: “Now therefore I will go unto Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor of the saints which are at Jerusalem. For it hath pleased them; and their debtors they are. For if in their spiritual things the Gentiles have communicated, they ought also in carnal things to minister unto them.” This is like that which he says to the Corinthians: “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?” Also to the Corinthians in the second Epistle: “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality; for to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves; with many prayers beseeching of us the grace and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints: and not as we hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God, insomuch, that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. But as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the exceeding dearth of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich. And herein I give advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be willing a year ago; now therefore perfect it in the doing; that as there is a readiness to will, so of performance also out of that which each hath. For if there be first a ready mind, it is acceptable according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not. Not, namely, that others may have ease, and ye straits; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for

their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want: that there may be equality, as it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack. But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus: for indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went forth unto you. And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches; and not that only, but he was also ordained of the Churches as a companion of our travail, with this grace which is administered by us to the glory of the Lord, and our ready mind: avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us. For we provide for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.” In these words appeareth how much the Apostle willed it not only to be the care of the holy congregations to minister necessities to the holy servants of God, giving counsel in this, because this was profitable more to the persons themselves who did this, than to them towards whom they did it, (for to those another thing was profitable, that is, that they should make of this service of their brethren towards them an holy use, and not with an eye to this serve God, nor take these things but to supply necessity, not to feed laziness;) but likewise his own care the blessed Apostle saith to be so great in this ministration which was now in transmitting through Titus, that a companion of his journey was on this account, he tells us, ordained by the Churches, a man of God well reported of, “whose praise,” says he, “is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches.” And to this end, he says, was the same ordained to be his companion, that he might avoid men’s reprehensions, lest, without witness of saints associated with him in this ministry, he should be thought by weak and impious men to receive for himself and turn aside into his own bosom, what he was receiving for supplying the necessities of the saints, by him to be brought and distributed to the needy.

18. And a little after he saith, “For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you. For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many. Yet have we sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that,

as I said, ye may be ready: lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this substance. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand this your long promised benediction, that the same might be ready, as benediction, and not as covetousness. But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth in benediction shall reap also in benediction. Every man according as he hath purposed in his heart, not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound in you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: as it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. But He that ministereth seed to the sower will both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the growing fruits of your righteousness; that ye may be enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God: for the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but makes them also to abound by thanksgiving unto God of many, while by the proof of this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men; and in the praying for you of them which long after you for the excellent grace of God in you. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” In what richness of holy gladness must the Apostle have been steeped, while he speaks of the mutual supply of the need of Christ’s soldiers and His other subjects, on the one part of carnal things to those, on the other of spiritual things to these, to exclaim as he does, and as it were in repletion of holy joys to burst out with, “Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!”

19. As therefore the Apostle, nay rather the Spirit of God possessing and filling and actuating his heart, ceased not to exhort the faithful who had such substance, that nothing should be lacking to the necessities of the servants of God, who wished to hold a more lofty degree of sanctity in the Church, in cutting off all ties of secular hope, and dedicating a mind at liberty to their godly service of warfare: likewise ought themselves also to obey his precepts, in sympathizing with the weak, and unshackled by love

of private wealth, to labor with their hands for the common good, and submit to their superiors without a murmur; that there may be made up for them out of the oblations of good believers that which, while they labor and do some work whereby they may get their living, yet still by reason of bodily infirmities of some, and by reason of ecclesiastical occupations or erudition of the doctrine which bringeth salvation, they shall account to be lacking.

20. For what these men are about, who will not do bodily work, to what thing they give up their time, I should like to know. "To prayers," say they, "and psalms, and reading, and the word of God." A holy life, unquestionably, and in sweetness of Christ worthy of praise; but then, if from these we are not to be called off, neither must we eat, nor our daily viands themselves be prepared, that they may be put before us and taken. Now if to find time for these things the servants of God at certain intervals of times by very infirmity are of necessity compelled, why do we not make account of some portions of times to be allotted also to the observance of Apostolical precepts? For one single prayer of one who obeyeth is sooner heard than ten thousand of a despiser. As for divine songs, however, they can easily, even while working with their hands, say them, and like as rowers with a boat-song, so with godly melody cheer up their very toil. Or are we ignorant how it is with all workmen, to what vanities, and for the most part even filthinesses, of theatrical fables they give their hearts and tongues, while their hands recede not from their work? What then hinders a servant of God while working with his hands to meditate in the law of the Lord, and sing unto the Name of the Lord Most High? provided, of course, that to learn what he may by memory rehearse, he have times set apart. For to this end also those good works of the faithful ought not to be lacking, for resource of making up what is necessary, that the hours which are so taken up in storing of the mind that those bodily works cannot be carried on, may not oppress with want. But they which say that they give up their time to reading, do they not there find that which the Apostle enjoineth? Then what perversity is this, to refuse to be ruled by his reading while he wishes to give up his time thereto; and that he may spend more time in reading what is good, therefore to refuse to do what is read? For who knows not that each

doth the more quickly profit when he reads good things, the quicker he is in doing what he reads?

21. Moreover, if discourse must be bestowed upon any, and this so take up the speaker that he have not time to work with his hands, are all in the monastery able to hold discourse unto brethren which come unto them from another kind of life, whether it be to expound the divine lessons, or concerning any questions which may be put, to reason in an wholesome manner? Then since not all have the ability, why upon this pretext do all want to have nothing else to do? Although even if all were able, they ought to do it by turns; not only that the rest might not be taken up from necessary works, but also because it sufficeth that to many hearers there be one speaker. To come now to the Apostle; how could he find time to work with his hands, unless for the bestowing of the word of God he had certain set times? And indeed God hath not willed this either to be hidden from us. For both of what craft he was a workman, and at what times he was taken up with dispensing the Gospel, holy Scripture has not left untold. Namely, when the day of his departure caused him to be in haste, being at Troas, even on the first day of the week when the brethren were assembled to break bread, such was his earnestness, and so necessary the disputation, that his discourse was prolonged even until midnight, as though it had slipped from their minds that on that day it was not a fast: but when he was making longer stay in any place and disputing daily, who can doubt that he had certain hours set apart for this office? For at Athens, because he had there found most studious inquirers of things, it is thus written of him: "He disputed therefore with the Jews in the synagogue, and with the Gentile inhabitants in the market every day to those who were there." Not, namely, in the synagogue every day, for there it was his custom to discourse on the sabbath; but "in the market," saith he, "every day;" by reason, doubtless, of the studiousness of the Athenians. For so it follows: "Certain however of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers conferred with him." And a little after, it says: "Now the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Let us suppose him all those days that he was at Athens not to have worked: on this account, indeed, was his need supplied from Macedonia, as he says in the second to the Corinthians: though in fact he could work both at other hours



and of nights, because he was so strong in both mind and body. But when he had gone from Athens, let us see what says the Scripture: “He disputed,” saith it, “in the synagogue every sabbath;” this at Corinth. In Troas, however, where through necessity of his departure being close at hand, his discourse was protracted until midnight, it was the first day of the week, which is called the Lord’s Day: whence we understand that he was not with Jews but with Christians; when also the narrator himself saith they were gathered together to break bread. And indeed this same is the best management, that all things be distributed to their times and be done in order, lest becoming ravelled in perplexing entanglements, they throw our human mind into confusion.

22. There also is said at what work the Apostle wrought. “After these things,” it says, “he departed from Athens and came to Corinth; and having found a certain Jew, by name Aquila, of Pontus by birth, lately come from Italy, and Priscilla his wife, because that Claudius had ordered all Jews to depart from Rome, he came unto them, and because he was of the same craft he abode with them, doing work: for they were tent-makers.” This if they shall essay to interpret allegorically, they show what proficients they be in ecclesiastical learning, on which they glory that they bestow all their time. And, at the least, touching those sayings above recited, “Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?” and, “We have not used this power;” and, “When we might be burdensome to you, as Apostles of Christ,” and, “Night and day working that we might not burden any of you;” and, “The Lord hath ordained for them which preach the Gospel, of the Gospel to live; but I have used none of these things:” and the rest of this kind, let them either expound otherwise, or if by most clear shining light of truth they be put to it, let them understand and obey; or if to obey they be either unwilling or unable, at least let them own them which be willing, to be better, and them which be also able, to be happier men than they. For it is one thing to plead infirmity of body, either truly alleged, or falsely pretended: but another so to be deceived and so to deceive, that it shall even be thought a proof of righteousness obtaining more mightily in servants of God, if laziness have gotten power to reign among a set of ignorant men. He, namely, who shows a true infirmity of body, must be humanely dealt withal; he who pretends a false one, and cannot be convicted, must be left

unto God: yet neither of them fixeth a pernicious rule; because a good servant of God both serves his manifestly infirm brother; and, when the other deceives, if he believes him because he does not think him a bad man, he does not imitate him that he may be bad; and if he believe him not; he thinks him deceitful, and does, nevertheless, not imitate him. But when a man says, "This is true righteousness, that by doing no bodily work we imitate the birds of the air, because he who shall do any such work, goes against the Gospel:" whoso being infirm in mind hears and believes this, that person, not for that he so bestows all his time, but for that he so erreth, must be mourned over.

23. Hence arises another question; for peradventure one may say, "What then? did the other Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas, sin, in that they did not work? Or did they occasion an hindrance to the Gospel, because blessed Paul saith that he had not used this power on purpose that he might not cause any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ? For if they sinned because they wrought not, then had they not received power not to work, but to live instead by the Gospel. But if they had received this power, by ordinance of the Lord, that they which preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel; and by His saying, "The workman is worthy of his meat;" which power Paul, laying out somewhat more, would not use; then truly they sinned not. If they sinned not, they caused no hindrance. For it is not to be thought no sin to hinder the Gospel. If this be so, "to us also," say they, "it is free either to use or not to use this power."

24. This question I should briefly solve, if I should say, because I should also justly say, that we must believe the Apostle. For he himself knew why in the Churches of the Gentiles it was not meet that a venal Gospel were carried about; not finding fault with his fellow-apostles, but distinguishing his own ministry; because they, without doubt by admonition of the Holy Ghost, had so distributed among them the provinces of evangelizing, that Paul and Barnabas should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the Circumcision. But that he gave this precept to them who had not the like power, those many things already said do make manifest. But these brethren of ours rashly arrogate unto themselves, so far as I can judge, that they have this kind of power. For if they be evangelists, I confess, they have it: if

ministers of the altar, dispensers of sacraments, of course it is no arrogating to themselves, but a plain vindicating of a right.

25. If at the least they once had in this world wherewithal they might easily without handiwork sustain this life, which property, when they were converted unto God, they imparted to the needy, then must we both believe their infirmity, and bear with it. For usually such persons, having been, not better brought up, as many think, but what is the truth, more languidly brought up, are not able to bear the labor of bodily works. Such peradventure were many in Jerusalem. For it is also written, that they sold their houses and lands, and laid the prices of them at the Apostles' feet, that distribution might be made to every one as he had need. Because they were found, being near, and were useful to the Gentiles, who, being afar off, were thence called from the worship of idols, as it is said, "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," therefore hath the Apostle called the Christians of the Gentiles their debtors: "their debtors," saith he, "they are:" and hath added the reason why, "For if in their spiritual things the Gentiles have communicated, they ought also in carnal things to minister unto them." But now there come into this profession of the service of God, both persons from the condition of slaves, or also freed-men, or persons on this account freed by their masters or about to be freed, likewise from the life of peasants, and from the exercise and plebeian labor of handicraftsmen, persons whose bringing up doubtless has been all the better for them, the harder it has been: whom not to admit, is a heavy sin. For many of that sort have turned out truly great men and meet to be imitated. For on this account also "hath God chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and the foolish things of the world hath He chosen to confound them who are wise; and ignoble things of the world, and things which are not, as though they were, that the things that are may be brought to nought: that no flesh may glory before God." This pious and holy thought, accordingly, causeth that even such be admitted as bring no proof of a change of life for the better. For it doth not appear whether they come of purpose for the service of God, or whether running away empty from a poor and laborious life they want to be fed and clothed; yea, moreover, to be honored by them of whom they were wont to be despised and trampled on. Such persons therefore because they cannot

excuse themselves from working by pleading infirmity of body, seeing they are convicted by the custom of their past life, do therefore shelter themselves under the screen of an ill scholarship, that from the Gospel badly understood they should essay to pervert precepts apostolical: truly “fowls of the air,” but in lifting themselves on high through pride; and “grass of the field,” but in being carnally minded.

26. That, namely, befalleth them which in undisciplined younger widows, the same Apostle saith must be avoided: “And withal they learn to be idle; and not only idle, but also busy bodies and full of words, speaking what they ought not.” This very thing said he concerning evil women, which we also in evil men do mourn and bewail, who against him, the very man in whose Epistles we read these things, do, being idle and full of words, speak what they ought not. And if there be any among them who did with that purpose come to the holy warfare, that they may please Him to whom they have proved themselves, these, when they be so vigorous in strength of body, and soundness of health, that they are able not only to be taught, but also, agreeably unto the Apostle, to work, do, by receiving of these men’s idle and corrupt discourses, which they are unable, by reason of their unskilled rawness, to judge of, become changed by pestiferous contagion into the same noisomeness: not only not imitating the obedience of saints which quietly work, and of other monasteries which in most wholesome discipline do live after the apostolic rule; but also insulting better men than themselves, preaching up laziness as the keeper of the Gospel, accusing mercy as the prevaricator therefrom. For a much more merciful work is it to the souls of the weak, to consult for the fair fame of the servants of God, than it is to the bodies of men, to break bread to the hungry. Wherefore I would to God that these, which want to let their hands lie idle, would altogether let their tongues lie idle too. For they would not make so many willing to imitate them, if the examples they set were not merely lazy ones, but mute withal.

27. As it is, however, they, against the Apostle of Christ, recite a Gospel of Christ. For so marvellous are the works of the sluggards, hindered that they want to have that very thing by Gospel, which the Apostle enjoined and did on purpose that the Gospel itself should not be hindered. And yet, if from

the very words of the Gospel we should compel them to live agreeably with their way of understanding it, they will be the first to endeavor to persuade us how they are not to be understood so as they do understand them. For certainly, they say that they therefore ought not to work, for that the birds of the air neither sow nor reap, of which the Lord hath given us a similitude that we should take no thought about such necessities. Then why do they not attend to that which follows? For it is not only said, that “they sow not, neither reap;” but there is added, “nor gather in apothecas.” Now “apothecae” may be called either “barns,” or word for word, “repositories.” Then why do these persons want to have idle hands and full repositories? Why do they lay by and keep what they receive of the labors of others, that thereof may be every day somewhat forthcoming? Why, in short, do they grind and cook? For the birds do not this. Or, if they find some whom they may persuade to this work also, namely, to bring unto them day by day viands ready made; at least their water they either fetch them from springs, or from cisterns and wells draw and set it by: this the fowls do not. But if so please them, let it be the study of good believers and most devoted subjects of the Eternal King, to carry their service to His most valiant soldiers even to that length, that they shall not be forced even to fill a vessel of water for themselves, if now-a-days people have surpassed even them which at that time were at Jerusalem, in a new grade of righteousness, stepping out beyond them. To them, namely, by reason of famine being imminent, and foretold by the Prophets which were at that time, good believers sent out of Greece supplies of corn; of which I suppose they made them bread, or at least procured to be made; which thing the birds do not. But if now-a-days these persons, as I began to say, have surpassed these in some grade of righteousness, and do altogether in things pertaining to the maintenance of this life, as do the birds; let them show us men doing such service unto birds as they wish to be done unto them, except indeed birds caught and caged because they are not trusted, lest if they fly they come not back: and yet these would rather enjoy liberty and receive from the fields what is enough, than take their food by men laid before them and made ready.

28. Here then shall these persons in their turn be in another more sublime degree of righteousness outdone, by them who shall so order themselves, that every day they shall betake them into the fields as unto pasture, and at

what time they shall find it, pick up their meal, and having allayed their hunger, return. But plainly, on account of the keepers of the fields, how good were it, if the Lord should deign to bestow wings also, that the servants of God being found in other men's fields should not be taken up as thieves, but as starlings be scared off. As things are, however, such an one will do all he can to be like a bird, which the fowler shall not be able to catch. But, lo, let all men allow this to the servants of God, that when they will they should go forth into their fields, and thence depart fearless and refreshed: as it was ordered to the people Israel by the law, that none should lay hands on a thief in his fields, unless he wanted to carry any thing away with him from thence; for if he laid hands on nothing but what he had eaten, they would let him go away free and unpunished. Whence also when the disciples of the Lord plucked the ears of corn, the Jews calumniated them on the score of the sabbath rather than of theft. But how is one to manage about those times of year, at which food that can be taken on the spot is not found in the fields? Whoso shall attempt to take home with him any thing which by cooking he may prepare for himself, he shall, according to these persons' understanding of it, be accosted from the Gospel with, "Put it down; for this the birds do not."

29. But let us grant this also, that the whole year round there may in the fields be found either of tree or of herbs or of any manner of roots, that which may be taken as food uncooked; or, at any rate, let so great exercise of body be used, that the things which require cooking, may be taken even raw without hurt, and people may even in winter weather, no matter how rough, go forth to their fodder; and so it shall be the case that nothing be taken away to be prepared, nothing laid up for the morrow. Yet will not those men be able to keep these rules, who for many days separating themselves from sight of men, and allowing none access to them, do shut themselves up, living in great earnestness of prayers. For these do use to shut up with themselves store of aliments, such indeed as are most easily and cheaply had, yet still a store which may suffice for those days during which they purpose that no man shall see them; which thing the birds do not. Now touching these men's exercising of themselves in so marvellous continency, seeing that they have leisure for the doing of these things, and not in proud elation but in merciful sanctity do propose themselves for

men's imitation, I not only do not blame it, but know not how to praise it as much as it deserves. And yet what are we to say of such men, according to these persons' understanding of the evangelical words? Or haply the holier they be, the more unlike are they to the fowls? because unless they lay by for themselves food for many days, to shut themselves up as they do they will not have strength? Howbeit, to them as well as us is it said, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow."

30. Wherefore, that I may briefly embrace the whole matter, let these persons, who from perverse understanding of the Gospel labor to pervert apostolical precepts, either take no thought for the morrow, even as the birds of the air; or let them obey the Apostle, as dear children: yea rather, let them do both, because both accord. For things contrary to his Lord, Paul the servant of Jesus Christ would never advise. This then we say openly to these persons; If the birds of the air ye in such wise understand in the Gospel, that ye will not by working with your hands procure food and clothing; then neither must ye put any thing by for the morrow, like as the birds of the air do put nothing by. But if to put somewhat by for the morrow, is possibly not against the Gospel where it is said, "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into stores;" then is it possibly not against the Gospel nor against similitude of the birds of the air, to maintain this life of the flesh by labor of corporal working.

31. For if they be urged from the Gospel that they should put nothing by for the morrow, they most rightly answer, "Why then had the Lord Himself a bag in which to put by the money which was collected? Why so long time beforehand, on occasion of impending famine, were supplies of corn sent to the holy fathers? Why did Apostles in such wise provide things necessary for the indigence of saints lest there should be lack thereafter, that most blessed Paul should thus write to the Corinthians in his Epistle: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that the gatherings be not then first made when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with

me?” These and much else they most copiously and most truly bring forward. To whom we answer: Ye see then, albeit the Lord said, “Take no thought for the morrow,” yet ye are not by these words constrained to reserve nothing for the morrow: then why do ye say that by the same words ye are constrained to do nothing? Why are the birds of the air not a pattern unto you for reserving nothing, and ye will have them to be a pattern for working nothing?

32. Some man will say: “What then does it profit a servant of God, that, having left the former doings which he had in the world he is converted unto the spiritual life and warfare, if it still behove him to do business as of a common workman?” As if truly it could be easily unfolded in words, how greatly profiteth what the Lord, in answer to that rich man who was seeking counsel of laying hold on eternal life, told him to do if he would fain be perfect: sell that he had, distribute all to the indigence of the poor, and follow Him? Or who with so unimpeded course hath followed the Lord, as he who saith, “Not in vain have I run, nor in vain labored?” who yet both enjoined these works, and did them. This unto us, being by so great authority taught and informed, ought to suffice for a pattern of relinquishing our old resources, and of working with our hands. But we too, aided by the Lord Himself, are able perchance in some sort to apprehend what it doth still profit the servants of God to have left their former businesses, while they do yet thus work. For if a person from being rich is converted to this mode of life, and is hindered by no infirmity of body, are we so without taste of the savor of Christ, as not to understand what an healing it is to the swelling of the old pride, when, having pared off the superfluities by which erewhile the mind was deadly inflamed, he refuses not, for the procuring of that little which is still naturally necessary for this present life, even a common workman’s lowly toil? If however he be from a poor estate converted unto this manner of life, let him not account himself to be doing that which he was doing aforetime, if foregoing the love of even increasing his ever so small matter of private substance, and now no more seeking his own but the things which be Jesu Christ’s, he hath translated himself into the charity of a life in common, to live in fellowship of them who have one soul and one heart to Godward, so that no man saith that any thing is his own, but they have all things common. For if in this earthly commonwealth



its chief men in the old times did, as their own men of letters are wont in their most glowing phrase to tell of them, to that degree prefer the common weal of the whole people of their city and country to their own private affairs, that one of them, for subduing of Africa honored with a triumph, would have had nothing to give to his daughter on her marriage, unless by decree of the senate she had been dowered from the public treasury: of what mind ought he to be towards his commonwealth, who is a citizen of that eternal City, the heavenly Jerusalem, but that even what with labor of his own hands he earns, he should have in common with his brother, and if the same lack any thing, supply it from the common store; saying with him whose precept and example he hath followed, “As having nothing, and possessing all things?”

33. Wherefore even they which having relinquished or distributed their former, whether ample or in any sort opulent, means, have chosen with pious and wholesome humility to be numbered among the poor of Christ; if they be so strong in body and free from ecclesiastical occupations, (albeit, bringing as they do so great a proof of their purpose, and conferring from their former havings, either very much, or not a little, upon the indigence of the same society, the common fund itself and brotherly charity owes them in return a sustenance of their life,) yet if they too work with their hands, that they may take away all excuse from lazy brethren who come from a more humble condition in life, and therefore one more used to toil; therein they act far more mercifully than when they divided all their goods to the needy. If indeed they be unwilling to do this, who can venture to compel them? Yet then there ought to be found for them works in the monastery, which if more free from bodily exercise, require to be looked unto with vigilant administration, that not even they may eat their bread for nought, because it is now become the common property. Nor is it to be regarded in what monasteries, or in what place, any man may have bestowed his former having upon his indigent brethren. For all Christians make one commonwealth. And for that cause whoso shall have, no matter in what place, expended upon Christians the things they needed, in what place soever he also receiveth what himself hath need of, from Christ's goods he doth receive it. Because in what place soever himself has given to such, who but Christ received it? But, as for them who before they entered this

holy society got their living by labor of the body, of which sort are the more part of them which come into monasteries, because of mankind also the more part are such; if they will not work, neither let them eat. For not to that end are the rich, in this Christian warfare, brought low unto piety, that the poor may be lifted up unto pride. As indeed it is by no means seemly that in that mode of life where senators become men of toil, there common workmen should become men of leisure; and whereunto there come, relinquishing their dainties, men who had been masters of houses and lands, there common peasants should be dainty.

34. But then the Lord saith, “Be not solicitous for your life what ye shall eat, nor for the body, what ye shall put on.” Rightly: because He had said above, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” For he who preaches the Gospel with an eye to this, that he may have whereof he may eat and whereof be clothed, accounts that he at the same time both serves God, because he preaches the Gospel; and mammon, because he preaches with an eye to these necessities: which thing the Lord saith to be impossible. And hereby he who doth for the sake of these things preach the Gospel is convicted that he serves not God but mammon; however God may use him, he knows not how, to other men’s advancement. For to this sentence doth He subjoin, saying “Therefore I say unto you, Be not solicitous for your life what ye shall eat, nor for your body what ye shall put on:” not that they should not procure these things, as much as is enough for necessity, by what means they honestly may; but that they should not look to these things, and for the sake of these do whatever in preaching of the Gospel they are bidden to do. The intention, namely, for which a thing is done, He calls the eye: of which a little above He was speaking with purpose to come down to this, and saying, “The light of thy body is thine eye: if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness;” that is, such will be thy deeds as shall be thine intention for which thou doest them. For indeed that He might come to this, He had before given precept concerning alms, saying, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth where rust and moth doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where thy treasure shall be, there will thy heart

be also.” Thereupon He subjoined, “The light of thy body is thine eye:” that they, to wit, which do alms, do them not with that intention that they should either wish to please men, or seek to have repayment on earth of the alms they do. Whence the Apostle, giving charge to Timothy for warning of rich men, “Let them,” says he “readily give, communicate, treasure up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life.” Since then the Lord hath to the future life directed the eye of them which do alms, and to an heavenly reward, in order that the deeds themselves may be full of light when the eye shall be simple, (for of that last retribution is meant that which He says in another place, “He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, his reward shall not be lost,” ) lest haply after he had reprov’d the eye of them which bestow things needful upon the indigent both prophets and just men and disciples of the Lord, the eye of the persons to whom these things were done should become deprav’d, so that for the sake of receiving these things they should wish to serve Christ as His soldiers: “No man,” saith He, “can serve two masters.” And a little after: “Ye cannot,” saith He, “serve God and mammon.” And straightway He hath added, “Therefore I say unto you, be not solicitous for your life what ye shall eat, nor for the body what ye shall put on.”

35. And that which follows concerning birds of the air and lilies of the field, He saith to this end, that no man may think that God careth not for the needs of His servants; when His most wise Providence reacheth unto these in creating and governing those. For it must not be deemed that it is not He that feeds and clothes them also which work with their hands. But lest they turn aside the Christian service of warfare unto their purpose of getting these things, the Lord in this premonisheth His servants that in this ministry which is due to His Sacrament, we should take thought, not for these, but for His kingdom and righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto us, whether working by our hands, or whether by infirmity of body hindered from working, or whether bound by such occupation of our very

warfare that we are able to do nothing else. For neither does it follow that because the Lord hath said, "Call upon Me in the day of tribulation and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me," therefore the Apostle ought not to have fled, and to be let down by the wall in a basket that he might escape the hands of a pursuer, but should rather have waited to be taken, that, like the three children from the midst of the fires, the Lord might deliver him. Or for this reason ought not the Lord either to have said this, "If they shall persecute you in one city, flee ye to another," namely, because He hath said, "If ye shall ask of the Father any thing in My name, He will give it you." As then whoever to Christ's disciples when fleeing from persecution should cast up this sort of question, why they did not rather stand, and by calling upon God obtain through His marvellous works in such wise deliverance, as Daniel from the lions, as Peter from his chains, they would answer that they ought not to tempt God, but He would then and then only do the like for them, if it should please Him, when they had nothing that they could do; but when He put flight in their power, although they were thereby delivered, yet were they not delivered but by Him: so likewise to servants of God having time and strength after the example and precept of the Apostle to get their living by their own hands, if any from the Gospel shall raise a question concerning the birds of the air, which sow not nor reap nor gather into stores, and concerning lilies of the field that they toil not neither do they spin; they will easily answer, "If we also, by reason of any either infirmity or occupation cannot work, He will so feed and clothe us, as He doth the birds and the lilies, which do no work of this kind: but when we are able, we ought not to tempt our God; because this very ability of ours, we have it by His gift, and in living by it, we live by His bounty Who hath bounteously bestowed upon us that we should have this ability. And therefore concerning these necessary things we are not solicitous; because when we are able to do these things, He by Whom mankind are fed and clothed doth feed and clothe us: but when we are not able to do these things, He feeds and clothes us by Whom the birds are fed and the lilies clothed, because we are more worth than they. Wherefore in this our warfare, neither for the morrow take we thought: because not for the sake of these temporal things, whereunto pertaineth To-morrow, but for the sake of those eternal things, where it is evermore To-day, have we

proved ourselves unto Him, that, entangled in no secular business, we may please Him.

36. Since these things are so, suffer me awhile, holy brother, (for the Lord giveth me through thee great boldness,) to address these same our sons and brethren whom I know with what love thou together with us dost travail in birth withal, until the Apostolic discipline be formed in them. O servants of God, soldiers of Christ, is it thus ye dissemble the plottings of our most crafty foe, who fearing your good fame, that so goodly odor of Christ, lest good souls should say, "We will run after the odor of thine ointments," and so should escape his snares, and in every way desiring to obscure it with his own stench, hath dispersed on every side so many hypocrites under the garb of monks, strolling about the provinces, no where sent, no where fixed, no where standing, no where sitting. Some hawking about limbs of martyrs, if indeed of martyrs; others magnifying their fringes and phylacteries; others with a lying story, how they have heard say that their parents or kinsmen are alive in this or that country, and therefore be they on their way to them: and all asking, all exacting, either the costs of their lucrative want, or the price of their pretended sanctity. And in the meanwhile wheresoever they be found out in their evil deeds, or in whatever way they become notorious, under the general name of monks, your purpose is blasphemed, a purpose so good, so holy, that in Christ's name we desire it, as through other lands so through all Africa, to grow and flourish. Then are ye not inflamed with godly jealousy? Does not your heart wax hot within you, and in your meditation a fire kindle, that these men's evil works ye should pursue with good works, that ye should cut off from them occasion of a foul trafficking, by which your estimation is hurt, and a stumbling-block put before the weak? Have mercy then and have compassion, and show to mankind that ye are not seeking in ease a ready subsistence, but through the strait and narrow way of this purpose, are seeking the kingdom of God. Ye have the same cause which the Apostle had, to cut off occasion from them which seek occasion, that they who by their stinks are suffocated, by your good odor may be refreshed.

37. We are not binding heavy burdens and laying them upon your shoulders, while we with a finger will not touch them. Seek out, and

acknowledge the labor of our occupations, and in some of us the infirmities of our bodies also, and in the Churches which we serve, that custom now grown up, that they do not suffer us to have time ourselves for those works to which we exhort you. For though we might say, “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth a flock, and partaketh not of the milk of the flock?” yet I call our Lord Jesus, in Whose name I fearlessly say these things, for a witness upon my soul, that so far as it concerns mine own convenience, I would much rather every day at certain hours, as much as is appointed by rule in well-governed monasteries, do some work with my hands, and have the remaining hours free for reading and praying, or some work pertaining to Divine Letters, than have to hear these most annoying perplexities of other men’s causes about secular matters, which we must either by adjudication bring to an end, or by intervention cut short. Which troubles the same Apostle hath fastened us withal, (not by his own sentence, but by His who spake through him,) while yet we do not read that he had to put up with them himself: indeed his was not the sort of work to admit of it, while running to and fro in his Apostleship. Nor hath he said, “If then ye have secular law-suits, bring them before us;” or, “Appoint us to judge them;” but, “Them which are contemptible in the Church, these,” saith he, “put ye in place. To your abashment I say it: is it so that there is not among you any wise man who can judge between his brother, but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before infidels?” So then wise believers and saints, having their stated abode in the different places, not those who were running hither and thither on the business of the Gospel, were the persons whom he willed to be charged with examination of such affairs. Whence it is nowhere written of him that he on any occasion gave up his time to such matters; from which we are not able to excuse ourselves, even though we be contemptible; because he willed even such to be put in place, in case there were lack of wise men, rather than have the affairs of Christians to be brought into the public courts. Which labor, however, we not without consolation of the Lord take upon us, for hope of eternal life, that we may bring forth fruit with patience. For we are servants unto His Church, and most of all to the weaker members, whatsoever members we in the same body may chance to be. I pass by other innumerable ecclesiastical cares, which perchance no man credits but he who hath experienced the same.

Therefore we do not bind heavy burdens and place them on your shoulders, while we ourselves touch them not so much as with a finger; since indeed if with safety to our office we might, (He seeth it, Who tries our hearts!) we would rather do these things which we exhort you to do, than the things which we ourselves are forced to do. True it is, to all both us and you, while according to our degree and office we labor, both the way is strait in labor and toil; and yet, while we rejoice in hope, His yoke is easy and His burden light, Who hath called us unto rest, Who passed forth before us from the vale of tears, where not Himself either was without pressure of griefs. If ye be our brethren, if our sons, if we be your fellow-servants, or rather in Christ your servants, hear what we admonish, acknowledge what we enjoin, take what we dispense. But if we be Pharisees, binding heavy burdens and laying them on your shoulders; yet do ye the things we say, even though ye disapprove the things we do. But to us it is a very small thing that we be judged by you, or of any human assize. Of how near and dear charity is our care on your behalf, let Him look into it Who hath given what we may offer to be looked into by His eyes. In fine: think what ye will of us: Paul the Apostle enjoins and beseeches you in the Lord, that with silence, that is, quietly and obediently ordered, ye do work and eat your own bread. Of him, as I suppose, ye believe no evil, and He who by him doth speak, on Him have ye believed.

38. These things, my brother Aurelius, most dear unto me, and in the bowels of Christ to be venerated, so far as He hath bestowed on me the ability Who through thee commanded me to do it, touching work of Monks, I have not delayed to write; making this my chief care, lest good brethren obeying apostolic precepts, should by lazy and disobedient be called even prevaricators from the Gospel: that they which work not, may at the least account them which do work to be better than themselves without doubt. But who can bear that contumacious persons resisting most wholesome admonitions of the Apostle, should, not as weaker brethren be borne withal, but even be preached up as holier men; insomuch that monasteries founded on sounder doctrine should be by this double enticement corrupted, the dissolute license of vacation from labor, and the false name of sanctity? Let it be known then to the rest, our brethren and sons, who are accustomed to favor such men, and through ignorance to defend this kind of presumption,

that they need themselves most chiefly to be corrected, in order that those may be corrected, nor that they become “weary in well-doing.” Truly, in that they do promptly and with alacrity minister unto the servants of God the things they need, not only we blame them not, but we most cordially embrace them: only let them not with perverse mercy more hurt these men’s future life, than to their present life they render aid.

39. For there is less sin, if people do not praise the sinner in the desires of his soul, and speak good of him who practiseth iniquities. Now what is more an iniquity than to wish to be obeyed by inferiors, and to refuse to obey superiors? The Apostle, I mean, not us: insomuch that they even let their hair grow long: a matter, of which he would have no disputing at all, saying, “If any chooseth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Church of God. Now this I command;” which gives us to understand that it is not cleverness of reasoning that we are to look for, but authority of one giving command to attend unto. For whereunto, I pray thee, pertaineth this also, that people so openly against the Apostle’s precepts wear long hair? Is it that there must be in such sort vacation, that not even the barbers are to work? Or, because they say that they imitate the Gospel birds, do they fear to be, as it were, plucked, lest they be not able to fly? I shrink from saying more against this fault, out of respect for certain long-haired brethren, in whom, except this, we find much, and well-nigh every thing, to venerate. But the more we love them in Christ, the more solicitously do we admonish them. Nor are we afraid indeed, lest their humility reject our admonition; seeing that we also desire to be admonished by such as they, wherever we chance to stumble or to go aside. This then we admonish so holy men, not to be moved by foolish quibblings of vain persons, and imitate in this perversity them whom in all else they are far from resembling. For those persons, hawking about a venal hypocrisy, fear lest shorn sanctity be held cheaper than long-haired; because forsooth he who sees them shall call to mind those ancients whom we read of, Samuel and the rest who did not cut off their hair. And they do not consider what is the difference between that prophetic veil, and this unveiling which is in the Gospel, of which the Apostle saith, “When thou shall go over unto Christ, the veil shall be taken away.” That, namely, which was signified in the veil interposed between the face of Moses and the beholding of the people



Israel, that same was also signified in those times by the long hair of the Saints. For the same Apostle saith, that long hair is also instead of a veil: by whose authority these men are hard pressed. Seeing he saith openly, "If a man wear long hair, it is a disgrace to him." "The very disgrace," say they, "we take upon us, for desert of our sins:" holding out a screen of simulated humility, to the end that under cover of it they may carry on their trade of self-importance. Just as if the Apostle were teaching pride when he says, "Every man praying or prophesying with veiled head shameth his head;" and, "A man ought not to veil his head, forsomuch as he is the image and glory of God." Consequently he who says, "Ought not," knows not perchance how to teach humility! However, if this same disgrace in time of the Gospel, which was a thing of a holy meaning in time of Prophecy, be by these people courted as matter of humility, then let them be shorn, and veil their head with haircloth. Only then there will be none of that attracting of people's eyes in which they trade, because Samson was veiled not with haircloth, but with his long hair.

40. And then that further device of theirs, (if words can express it), how painfully ridiculous is it, which they have invented for defense of their long locks! "A man," say they, "the Apostle hath forbidden to have long hair: but then they who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of God are no longer men." O dotage unparalleled! Well may the person who says this arm himself against Holy Scripture's most manifest proclamations, with counsel of outrageous impiety, and persevere in a tortuous path, and essay to bring in a pestiferous doctrine that not "Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, and in the way of sinners hath not stood, and in the chair of noisome wickedness hath not sat." For if he would meditate in God's law day and night, there he should find the Apostle Paul himself, who assuredly professing highest chastity saith, "I would that all men were even as I:" and yet shows himself a man, not only in so being, but also in so speaking. For he saith, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; when I became a man, I put away childish things." But why should I mention the Apostle, when concerning our Lord and Saviour Himself they know not what they think who say these things. For of Whom but Him is it said, "Until we come all to unity of faith and to knowledge of the Son of God, to the Perfect Man, to

the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ; that we be no longer babes, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine, in sleight of men, in cunning craftiness for machination of error.” With which sleight these persons deceive ignorant people, with which cunning craftiness and machinations of the enemy both they themselves are whirled round, and in their whirling essay to make the minds of the weak which cohere unto them so (in a manner) to spin round with them, that they also may not know where they are. For they have heard or read that which is written, “Whosoever of you have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ: where is no Jew nor Greek; no bond nor free; no male nor female.” And they do not understand that it is in reference to concupiscence of carnal sex that this is said, because in the inner man, wherein we are renewed in newness of our mind, no sex of this kind exists. Then let them not deny themselves to be men, just because in respect of their masculine sex they work not. For wedded Christians also who do this work, are of course not Christians on the score of that which they have in common with the rest who are not Christians and with the very cattle. For that is one thing that is either to infirmity conceded or to mortal propagation paid as a debt, but another that which for the laying hold of incorrupt and eternal life is by faithful profession signified. That then which concerning not veiling of the head is enjoined to men, in the body indeed it is set forth in a figure, but that it is enacted in the mind, wherein is the image and glory of God, the words themselves do indicate: “A man indeed,” it saith, “ought not to veil his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God.” For where this image is, he doth himself declare, where he saith, “Lie not one to another; but stripping off the old man with his deeds, put ye on the new, which is renewed to the acknowledging of God, according to the image of Him who created him.” Who can doubt that this renewing takes place in the mind? But and if any doubt, let him hear a more open sentence. For, giving the same admonition, he thus saith in another place: “As is the truth in Jesus, that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, him which is corrupt according to the lust of deception; but be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, him which after God is created.” What then? Have women not this renewal of mind in which is the image of God? Who would say this? But in the sex of their body they do not signify this; therefore they are bidden to be veiled. The part, namely, which they

signify in the very fact of their being women, is that which may be called the concupiscential part, over which the mind bears rule, itself also subjected to its God, when life is most rightly and orderly conducted. What, therefore, in a single individual human being is the mind and the concupiscence, (that ruling, this ruled; that lord, this subject,) the same in two human beings, man and woman, is in regard of the sex of the body exhibited in a figure. Of which sacred import the Apostle speaks when he says, that the man ought not to be veiled, the women ought. For the mind doth the more gloriously advance to higher things, the more diligently the concupiscence is curbed from lower things; until the whole man together with even this now mortal and frail body in the last resurrection be clothed with incorruption and immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory.

41. Wherefore, they which will not do right things, let them give over at least to teach wrong things. Howbeit they be others whom in this speech we reprove: but as for those who by this one fault, of letting their hair contrary to apostolic precept grow long, offend and trouble the Church, because when some being unwilling to think of them any thing amiss are forced to twist the manifest words of the Apostle into a wrong meaning, others choose to defend the sound understanding of the Scriptures rather than fawn upon any men, there arise between the weaker and the stronger brethren most bitter and perilous contentions: which things perchance if they knew, these would correct without hesitation this also, in whom we admire and love all else. Those then we not reprove, but ask and solemnly beseech by the Godhead and the Manhood of Christ and by the charity of the Holy Ghost, that they no more put this stumbling-block before the weak for whom Christ died, and aggravate the grief and torment of our heart when we bethink us how much more readily evil men can imitate this evil thing for deceiving of mankind, when they see this in them whom on the score of other so great good we with deserved offices of Christian love do honor. If however, after this admonition, or rather this solemn entreaty of ours, they shall think fit to persevere in the same, we shall do nothing else but only grieve and mourn. This let them know; it is enough. If they be servants of God, they have pity. If they have not pity, I will not say any thing worse. All these things, therefore, in the which peradventure I have been more loquacious than the occupations both of thee and of me could wish, if thou

approve the same, make thou to be known to our brethren and sons, on whose behalf thou hast deigned to put this burden upon me: but if aught seem to thee meet to be withdrawn or amended, by reply of your Blessedness I shall know the same.

# ON BAPTISM, AGAINST THE DONATISTS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

(DE BAPTISMO, CONTRA DONATISTAS, LIBRI VII )

CIRCA A.D. 400.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. J. R. KING, M.A., VICAR OF ST. PETER'S IN THE EAST,  
OXFORD; AND LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD.

# CONTENTS

## ON BAPTISM, AGAINST THE DONATISTS

Preface

### Book I

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

Chapter 7

Chapter 8

Chapter 9

Chapter 10

Chapter 11

Chapter 12

Chapter 13

Chapter 14

Chapter 15

Chapter 16

Chapter 17

Chapter 18

Chapter 19

## Book II

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

## Book III

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Chapter 16](#)

[Chapter 17](#)

[Chapter 18](#)

[Chapter 19](#)

[Book IV](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Chapter 16](#)

[Chapter 17](#)

[Chapter 18](#)

[Chapter 19](#)



[Chapter 20](#)

[Chapter 21](#)

[Chapter 22](#)

[Chapter 23](#)

[Chapter 24](#)

[Chapter 25](#)

[Chapter 26](#)

[Book V](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter. 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Chapter 16](#)

[Chapter 17](#)

[Chapter 18](#)

[Chapter 19](#)

[Chapter 20](#)

[Chapter 21](#)

[Chapter 22](#)

[Chapter 23](#)

[Chapter 24](#)

[Chapter 25](#)

[Chapter 26](#)

[Chapter 27](#)

[Chapter 28](#)

## [Book VI](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Chapter 16](#)

[Chapter 17](#)

[Chapter 18](#)

[Chapter 19](#)

[Chapter 20](#)

[Chapter 21](#)

[Chapter 22](#)

[Chapter 23](#)

[Chapter 24](#)

[Chapter 25](#)

[Chapter 26](#)

[Chapter 27](#)

[Chapter 28](#)

[Chapter 29](#)

[Chapter 30](#)

[Chapter 31](#)

[Chapter 32](#)

[Chapter 33](#)

[Chapter 34](#)

[Chapter 35](#)

[Chapter 36](#)

[Chapter 37](#)

[Chapter 38](#)

[Chapter 39](#)

[Chapter 40](#)

[Chapter 41](#)

[Chapter 42](#)

[Chapter 43](#)

[Chapter 44](#)

[Book VII](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Chapter 16](#)

[Chapter 17](#)

[Chapter 18](#)

[Chapter 19](#)

[Chapter 20](#)

[Chapter 21](#)

[Chapter 22](#)

[Chapter 23](#)

[Chapter 24](#)

[Chapter 25](#)

[Chapter 26](#)

[Chapter 27](#)

[Chapter 28](#)

[Chapter 29](#)

[Chapter 30](#)

[Chapter 31](#)

[Chapter 32](#)

[Chapter 33](#)

[Chapter 34](#)

[Chapter 35](#)

[Chapter 36](#)

[Chapter 37](#)

[Chapter 38](#)

[Chapter 39](#)

[Chapter 40](#)

[Chapter 41](#)

[Chapter 42](#)

[Chapter 43](#)

[Chapter 44](#)

[Chapter 45](#)

[Chapter 46](#)

[Chapter 47](#)

[Chapter 48](#)

[Chapter 49](#)

[Chapter 50](#)

[Chapter 51](#)

[Chapter 52](#)

[Chapter 53](#)

[Chapter 54](#)

# Preface

This treatise was written about 400 A.D. Concerning it Aug. in *Retract.* Book II. c. xviii., says: I have written seven books on Baptism against the Donatists, who strive to defend themselves by the authority of the most blessed bishop and martyr Cyprian; in which I show that nothing is so effectual for the refutation of the Donatists, and for shutting their mouths directly from upholding their schism against the Catholic Church, as the letters and act of Cyprian.

# Book I

He proves that baptism can be conferred outside the Catholic communion by heretics or schismatics, but that it ought not to be received from them; and that it is of no avail to any while in a state of heresy or schism.

## CHAPTER 1

1. In the treatise which we wrote against the published epistle of Parmenianus to Tichonius, we promised that at some future time we would treat the question of baptism more thoroughly; and indeed, even if we had not made this promise, we are not unmindful that this is a debt fairly due from us to the prayers of our brethren. Wherefore in this treatise we have undertaken, with the help of God, not only to refute the objections which the Donatists have been wont to urge against us in this matter, but also to advance what God may enable us to say in respect of the authority of the blessed martyr Cyprian, which they endeavor to use as a prop, to prevent their perversity from falling before the attacks of truth. And this we propose to do, in order that all whose judgment is not blinded by party spirit may understand that, so far from Cyprian's authority being in their favor, it tends directly to their refutation and discomfiture

2. In the treatise above mentioned, it has already been said that the grace of baptism can be conferred outside the Catholic communion, just as it can be also there retained. But no one of the Donatists themselves denies that even apostates retain the grace of baptism; for when they return within the pale of the Church, and are converted through repentance, it is never given to them a second time, and so it is ruled that it never could have been lost. So those, too, who in the sacrilege of schism depart from the communion of the Church, certainly retain the grace of baptism, which they received before their departure, seeing that, in case of their return, it is not again conferred on them whence it is proved, that what they had received while within the

unity of the Church, they could not have lost in their separation. But if it can be retained outside, why may it not also be given there? If you say, "It is not rightly given without the pale;" we answer, "As it is not rightly retained, and yet is in some sense retained, so it is not indeed rightly given, but yet it is given." But as, by reconciliation to unity, that begins to be profitably possessed which was possessed to no profit in exclusion from unity, so, by the same reconciliation, that begins to be profitable which without it was given to no profit. Yet it cannot be allowed that it should be said that that was not given which was given, nor that any one should reproach a man with not having given this, while confessing that he had given what he had himself received. For the sacrament of baptism is what the person possesses who is baptized; and the sacrament of conferring baptism is what he possesses who is ordained. And as the baptized person, if he depart from the unity of the Church, does not thereby lose the sacrament of baptism, so also he who is ordained, if he depart from the unity of the Church, does not lose the sacrament of conferring baptism. For neither sacrament may be wronged. If a sacrament necessarily becomes void in the case of the wicked, both must become void; if it remain valid with the wicked, this must be so with both. If, therefore, the baptism be acknowledged which he could not lose who severed himself from the unity of the Church, that baptism must also be acknowledged which was administered by one who by his secession had not lost the sacrament of conferring baptism. For as those who return to the Church, if they had been baptized before their secession, are not rebaptized, so those who return, having been ordained before their secession, are certainly not ordained again; but either they again exercise their former ministry, if the interests of the Church require it, or if they do not exercise it, at any rate they retain the sacrament of their ordination; and hence it is, that when hands are laid on them, to mark their reconciliation, they are not ranked with the laity. For Felicianus, when he separated himself from them with Maximianus, was not held by the Donatists themselves to have lost either the sacrament of baptism or the sacrament of conferring baptism. For now he is a recognized member of their own body, in company with those very men whom he baptized while he was separated from them in the schism of Maximianus. And so others could receive from them, whilst they still had not joined our society, what they themselves had not lost by severance from our society.



And hence it is clear that they are guilty of impiety who endeavor to rebaptize those who are in Catholic unity; and we act rightly who do not dare to repudiate God's sacraments, even when administered in schism. For in all points in which they think with us, they also are in communion with us, and only are severed from us in those points in which they dissent from us. For contact and disunion are not to be measured by different laws in the case of material or spiritual affinities. For as union of bodies arises from continuity of position, so in the agreement of wills there is a kind of contact between souls. If, therefore, a man who has severed himself from unity wishes to do anything different from that which had been impressed on him while in the state of unity, in this point he does sever himself, and is no longer a part of the united whole; but wherever he desires to conduct himself as is customary in the state of unity, in which he himself learned and received the lessons which he seeks to follow, in these points he remains a member, and is united to the corporate whole.

## CHAPTER 2

3. And so the Donatists in some matters are with us; in some matters have gone out from us. Accordingly, those things wherein they agree with us we do not forbid them to do; but in those things in which they differ from us, we earnestly encourage them to come and receive them from us, or return and recover them, as the case may be; and with whatever means we can, we lovingly busy ourselves, that they, freed from faults and corrected, may choose this course. We do not therefore say to them, "Abstain from giving baptism," but "Abstain from giving it in schism." Nor do we say to those whom we see them on the point of baptizing, "Do not receive the baptism," but "Do not receive it in schism." For if any one were compelled by urgent necessity, being unable to find a Catholic from whom to receive baptism, and so, while preserving Catholic peace in his heart, should receive from one without the pale of Catholic unity the sacrament which he was intending to receive within its pale, this man, should he forthwith depart this life, we deem to be none other than a Catholic. But if he should be delivered from the death of the body, on his restoring himself in bodily presence to that Catholic congregation from which in heart he had never departed, so far from blaming his conduct, we should praise it with the

greatest truth and confidence; because he trusted that God was present to his heart, while he was striving to preserve unity, and was unwilling to depart this life without the sacrament of holy baptism, which he knew to be of God, and not of men; wherever he might find it. But if any one who has it in his power to receive baptism within the Catholic Church prefers, from some perversity of mind, to be baptized in schism, even if he afterwards bethinks himself to come to the Catholic Church, because he is assured that there that sacrament will profit him, which can indeed be received but cannot profit elsewhere, beyond all question he is perverse, and guilty of sin, and that the more flagrant in proportion as it was committed wilfully. For that he entertains no doubt that the sacrament is rightly received in the Church, is proved by his conviction that it is there that he must look for profit even from what he has received elsewhere

#### CHAPTER 3

4. There are two propositions, moreover, which we affirm,—that baptism exists in the Catholic Church, and that in it alone can it be rightly received,—both of which the Donatists deny. Likewise there are two other propositions which we affirm,—that baptism exists among the Donatists, but that with them it is not rightly received, of which two they strenuously confirm the former, that baptism exists with them; but they are unwilling to allow the latter, that in their Church it cannot be rightly received. Of these four propositions, three are peculiar to us; in one we both agree. For that baptism exists in the Catholic Church, that it is rightly received there, and that it is not rightly received among the Donatists, are assertions made only by ourselves; but that baptism exists also among the Donatists, is asserted by them and allowed by us. If any one, therefore, is desirous of being baptized, and is already convinced that he ought to choose our Church as a medium for Christian salvation, and that the baptism of Christ is only profitable in it, even when it has been received elsewhere, but yet wishes to be baptized in the schism of Donatus, because not they only, nor we only, but both parties alike say that baptism exists with them, let him pause and look to the other three points. For if he has made up his mind to follow us in the points which they deny, though he prefers what both of us acknowledge, to what only we assert, it is enough for our purpose that he prefers what

they do not affirm and we alone assert, to what they alone assert. That baptism exists in the Catholic Church, we assert and they deny. That it is rightly received in the Catholic Church, we assert and they deny. That it is not rightly received in the schism of Donatus, we assert and they deny. As, therefore, he is the more ready to believe what we alone assert should be believed, so let him be the more ready to do what we alone declare should be done. But let him believe more firmly, if he be so disposed, what both parties assert should be believed, than what we alone maintain. For he is inclined to believe more firmly that the baptism of Christ exists in the schism of Donatus, because that is acknowledged by both of us, than that it exists in the Catholic Church, an assertion made alone by the Catholics. But again, he is more ready to believe that the baptism of Christ exists also with us, as we alone assert, than that it does not exist with us, as they alone assert. For he has already determined and is fully convinced, that where we differ, our authority is to be preferred to theirs. So that he is more ready to believe what we alone assert, that baptism is rightly received with us, than that it is not rightly so received, since that rests only on their assertion. And, by the same rule, he is more ready to believe what we alone assert, that it is not rightly received with them, than as they alone assert, that it is rightly so received. He finds, therefore, that his confidence in being baptized among the Donatists is somewhat profitless, seeing that, though we both acknowledge that baptism exists with them, yet we do not both declare that it ought to be received from them. But he has made up his mind to cling rather to us in matters where we disagree. Let him therefore feel confidence in receiving baptism in our communion, where he is assured that it both exists and is rightly received; and let him not receive it in a communion, where those whose opinion he has determined to follow acknowledge indeed that it exists, but say that it cannot rightly be received. Nay, even if he should hold it to be a doubtful question, whether or no it is impossible for that to be rightly received among the Donatists which he is assured can rightly be received in the Catholic Church, he would commit a grievous sin, in matters concerning the salvation of his soul, in the mere fact of preferring uncertainty to certainty. At any rate, he must be quite sure that a man can be rightly baptized in the Catholic Church, from the mere fact that he has determined to come over to it, even if he be baptized elsewhere. But let him at least acknowledge it to be matter of uncertainty whether a man be not

improperly baptized among the Donatists, when he finds this asserted by those whose opinion he is convinced should be preferred to theirs; and, preferring certainty to uncertainty, let him be baptized here, where he has good grounds for being assured that it is rightly done, in the fact that when he thought of doing it elsewhere, he had still determined that he ought afterwards to come over to this side

#### CHAPTER 4

5. Further, if any one fails to understand how it can be that we assert that the sacrament is not rightly conferred among the Donatists, while we confess that it exists among them, let him observe that we also deny that it exists rightly among them, just as they deny that it exists rightly among those who quit their communion. Let him also consider the analogy of the military mark, which, though it can both be retained, as by deserters, and, also be received by those who are not in the army, yet ought not to be either received or retained outside its ranks; and, at the same time, it is not changed or renewed when a man is enlisted or brought back to his service. However, we must distinguish between the case of those who unwittingly join the ranks of these heretics, under the impression that they are entering the true Church of Christ, and those who know that there is no other Catholic Church save that which, according to the promise, is spread abroad throughout the whole world, and extends even to the utmost limits of the earth; which, rising amid tares, and seeking rest in the future from the weariness of offenses, says in the Book of Psalms, "From the end of the earth I cried unto Thee, while my heart was in weariness: Thou didst exalt me on a rock." But the rock was Christ, in whom the apostle says that we are now raised up, and set together in heavenly places, though not yet actually, but only in hope. And so the psalm goes on to say, "Thou wast my guide, because Thou art become my hope, a tower of strength from the face of the enemy." By means of His promises, which are like spears and javelins stored up in a strongly fortified place, the enemy is not only guarded against, but overthrown, as he clothes his wolves in sheep's clothing, that they may say, "Lo, here is Christ, or there;" and that they may separate many from the Catholic city which is built upon a hill, and bring them down to the isolation of their own snares, so as utterly to destroy

them. And these men, knowing this, choose to receive the baptism of Christ without the limits of the communion of the unity of Christ's body, though they intend afterwards, with the sacrament which they have received elsewhere, to pass into that very communion. For they propose to receive Christ's baptism in antagonism to the Church of Christ, well knowing that it is so even on the very day on which they receive it. And if this is a sin, who is the man that will say, Grant that for a single day I may commit sin? For if he proposes to pass over to the Catholic Church, I would fain ask why. What other answer can he give, but that it is ill to belong to the party of Donatus, and not to the unity of the Catholic Church? Just so many days, then, as you commit this ill, of so many days' sin are you going to be guilty. And it may be said that there is greater sin in more days' commission of it, and less in fewer; but in no wise can it be said that no sin is committed at all. But what is the need of allowing this accursed wrong for a single day, or a single hour? For the man who wishes this license to be granted him, might as well ask of the Church, or of God Himself, that for a single day he should be permitted to apostatize. For there is no reason why he should fear to be an apostate for a day, if he does not shrink from being for that time a schismatic or a heretic

## CHAPTER 5

6. I prefer, he says, to receive Christ's baptism where both parties agree that it exists. But those whom you intend to join say that it cannot be received there rightly; and those who say that it can be received there rightly are the party whom you mean to quit. What they say, therefore, whom you yourself consider of inferior authority, in opposition to what those say whom you yourself prefer, is, if not false, at any rate, to use a milder term, at least uncertain. I entreat you, therefore, to prefer what is true to what is false, or what is certain to what is uncertain. For it is not only those whom you are going to join, but you yourself who are going to join them, that confess that what you want can be rightly received in that body which you mean to join when you have received it elsewhere. For if you had any doubts whether it could be rightly received there, you would also have doubts whether you ought to make the change. If, therefore, it is doubtful whether it be not sin to receive baptism from the party of Donatus, who can doubt but that it is

certain sin not to prefer receiving it where it is certain that it is not sin? And those who are baptized there through ignorance, thinking that it is the true Church of Christ, are guilty of less sin in comparison than these, though even they are wounded by the impiety of schism; nor do they escape a grievous hurt, because others suffer even more. For when it is said to certain men, "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you," it is not meant that the men of Sodom shall escape torment, but only that the others shall be even more grievously tormented

7. And yet this point had once, perhaps, been involved in obscurity and doubt. But that which is a source of health to those who give heed and receive correction, is but an aggravation of the sin of those who, when they are no longer suffered to be ignorant, persist in their madness to their own destruction. For the condemnation of the party of Maximianus, and their restoration after they had been condemned, together with those whom they had sacrilegiously, to use the language of their own Council, baptized in schism, settles the whole question in dispute, and removes all controversy. There is no point at issue between ourselves and those Donatists who hold communion with Primianus, which could give rise to any doubt that the baptism of Christ may not only be retained, but even conferred by those who are severed from the Church. For as they themselves are obliged to confess that those whom Felicianus baptized in schism received true baptism, inasmuch as they now acknowledge them as members of their own body, with no other baptism than that which they received in schism; so we say that that is Christ's baptism, even without the pale of Catholic communion, which they confer who are cut off from that communion, inasmuch as they had not lost it when they were cut off. And what they themselves think that they conferred on those persons whom Felicianus baptized in schism, when they admitted them to reconciliation with themselves, viz., not that they should receive that which they did not as yet possess, but that what they had received to no advantage in schism, and were already in possession of, should be of profit to them, this God really confers and bestows through the Catholic communion on those who come from any heresy or schism in which they received the baptism of Christ; viz., not that they should begin to receive the sacrament of baptism as not

possessing it before, but that what they already possessed should now begin to profit them.

#### CHAPTER 6

8. Between us, then, and what we may call the genuine Donatists, whose bishop is Primianus at Carthage, there is now no controversy on this point. For God willed that it should be ended by means of the followers of Maximianus, that they should be compelled by the precedent of his case to acknowledge what they would not allow at the persuasion of Christian charity. But this brings us to consider next, whether those men do not seem to have something to say for themselves, who refuse communion with the party of Primianus, contending that in their body there remains greater sincerity of Donatism, just in proportion to the paucity of their numbers. And even if these were only the party of Maximianus, we should not be justified in despising their salvation. How much more, then, are we bound to consider it, when we find that this same party of Donatus is split up into many most minute fractions, all which small sections of the body blame the one much larger portion which has Primianus for its head, because they receive the baptism of the followers of Maximianus; while each endeavors to maintain that it is the sole receptacle of true baptism, which exists nowhere else, neither in the whole of the world where the Catholic Church extends itself, nor in that larger main body of the Donatists, nor even in the other minute sections, but only in itself. Whereas, if all these fragments would listen not to the voice of man, but to the most unmistakable manifestation of the truth, and would be willing to curb the fiery temper of their own perversity, they would return from their own barrenness, not indeed to the main body of Donatus, a mere fragment of which they are a smaller fragment, but to the never-failing fruitfulness of the root of the Catholic Church. For all of them who are not against us are for us; but when they gather not with us, they scatter abroad

#### CHAPTER 7

9. For, in the next place, that I may not seem to rest on mere human arguments,—since there is so much obscurity in this question, that in earlier ages of the Church, before the schism of Donatus, it has caused men of

great weight, and even our fathers, the bishops, whose hearts were full of charity, so to dispute and doubt among themselves, saving always the peace of the Church, that the several statutes of their Councils in their different districts long varied from each other, till at length the most wholesome opinion was established, to the removal of all doubts, by a plenary Council of the whole world:—I therefore bring forward from the gospel clear proofs, by which I propose, with God’s help, to prove how rightly and truly in the sight of God it has been determined, that in the case of every schismatic and heretic, the wound which caused his separation should be cured by the medicine of the Church; but that what remained sound in him should rather be recognized with approbation, than wounded by condemnation. It is indeed true that the Lord says in the gospel, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” Yet when the disciples had brought word to Him that they had seen one casting out devils in His name, and had forbidden him, because he followed not them, He said, “Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us. For there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.” If, indeed, there were nothing in this man requiring correction, then any one would be safe who, setting himself outside the communion of the Church, severing himself from all Christian brotherhood, should gather in Christ’s name; and so there would be no truth in this, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” But if he required correction in the point where the disciples in their ignorance were anxious to check him, why did our Lord, by saying, “Forbid him not,” prevent this check from being given? And how can that be true which He then says, “He that is not against you is for you?” For in this point he was not against, but for them, when he was working miracles of healing in Christ’s name. That both, therefore, should be true, as both are true,—both the declaration, that “he that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad;” and also the injunction, “Forbid him not; for he that is not against you is for you,”—what must we understand, except that the man was to be confirmed in his veneration for that mighty Name, in respect of which he was not against the Church, but for it; and yet he was to be blamed for separating himself from the Church, whereby his gathering became a scattering; and if it should have so happened that he sought union with the Church, he should not have



received what he already possessed, but be made to set right the points wherein he had gone astray?

#### CHAPTER 8

10. Nor indeed were the prayers of the Gentile Cornelius unheard, nor did his alms lack acceptance; nay, he was found worthy that an angel should be sent to him, and that he should behold the messenger, through whom he might assuredly have learned everything that was necessary, without requiring that any man should come to him. But since all the good that he had in his prayers and alms could not benefit him unless he were incorporated in the Church by the bond of Christian brotherhood and peace, he was ordered to send to Peter, and through him learned Christ; and, being also baptized by his orders, he was joined by the tie of communion to the fellowship of Christians, to which before he was bound only by the likeness of good works. And indeed it would have been most fatal to despise what he did not yet possess, vaunting himself in what he had. So too those who, by separating themselves from the society of their fellows, to the overthrow of charity, thus break the bond of unity, if they observe none of the things which they have received in that society, are separated in everything; and so any one whom they have joined to their society, if he afterwards wish to come over to the Church, ought to receive everything which he has not already received. But if they observe some of the same things, in respect of these they have not severed themselves; and so far they are still a part of the framework of the Church, while in all other respects they are cut off from it. Accordingly, any one whom they have associated with themselves is united to the Church in all those points in which they are not separated from it. And therefore, if he wish to come over to the Church, he is made sound in those points in which he was unsound and went astray; but where he was sound in union with the Church, he is not cured, but recognized,—lest in desiring to cure what is sound we should rather inflict a wound. Therefore those whom they baptize they heal from the wound of idolatry or unbelief; but they injure them more seriously with the wound of schism. For idolaters among the people of the Lord were smitten with the sword; but schismatics were swallowed up by the earth opening her mouth. And the apostle says,

“Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”

11. If any one is brought to the surgeon, afflicted with a grievous wound in some vital part of the body, and the surgeon says that unless it is cured it must cause death, the friends who brought him do not, I presume, act so foolishly as to count over to the surgeon all his sound limbs, and, drawing his attention to them, make answer to him, “Can it be that all these sound limbs are of no avail to save his life, and that one wounded limb is enough to cause his death?” They certainly do not say this, but they entrust him to the surgeon to be cured. Nor, again, because they so entrust him, do they ask the surgeon to cure the limbs that are sound as well; but they desire him to apply drugs with all care to the one part from which death is threatening the other sound parts too, with the certainty that it must come, unless the wound be healed. What will it then profit a man that he has sound faith, or perhaps only soundness in the sacrament of faith, when the soundness of his charity is done away with by the fatal wound of schism, so that by the overthrow of it the other points, which were in themselves sound, are brought into the infection of death? To prevent which, the mercy of God, through the unity of His holy Church, does not cease striving that they may come and be healed by the medicine of reconciliation, through the bond of peace. And let them not think that they are sound because we admit that they have something sound in them; nor let them think, on the other hand, that what is sound must needs be healed, because we show that in some parts there is a wound. So that in the soundness of the sacrament, because they are not against us, they are for us; but in the wound of schism, because they gather not with Christ, they scatter abroad. Let them not be exalted by what they have. Why do they pass the eyes of pride over those parts only which are sound? Let them condescend also to look humbly on their wound, and give heed not only to what they have, but also to what is wanting in them.

## CHAPTER 9

12. Let them see how many things, and what important things, are of no avail, if a certain single thing be wanting, and let them see what that one thing is. And herein let them hear not my words, but those of the apostle:

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.” What does it profit them, therefore, if they have both the voice of angels in the sacred mysteries, and the gift of prophecy, as had Caiaphas and Saul, that so they may be found prophesying, of whom Holy Scripture testifies that they were worthy of condemnation? If they not only know, but even possess the sacraments, as Simon Magus did; if they have faith, as the devils confessed Christ (for we must not suppose that they did not believe when they said, “What have we to do with Thee, O Son of God? We know Thee who Thou art” ; if they distribute of themselves their own substance to the poor, as many do, not only in the Catholic Church, but in the different heretical bodies; if, under the pressure of any persecution, they give their bodies with us to be burned for the faith which they like us confess: yet because they do all these things apart from the Church, not “forbearing one another in love,” nor “endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,” insomuch as they have not charity, they cannot attain to eternal salvation, even with all those good things which profit them not

#### CHAPTER 10

13. But they think within themselves that they show very great subtlety in asking whether the baptism of Christ in the party of Donatus makes men sons or not; so that, if we allow that it does make them sons, they may assert that theirs is the Church, the mother which could give birth to sons in the baptism of Christ; and since the Church must be one, they may allege that ours is no Church. But if we say that it does not make them sons, “Why then,” say they, “do you not cause those who pass from us to you to be born again in baptism, after they have been baptized with us, if they are not thereby born as yet?”

14. Just as though their party gained the power of generation in virtue of what constitutes its division, and not from what causes its union with the Church. For it is severed from the bond of peace and charity, but it is joined in one baptism. And so there is one Church which alone is called Catholic;

and whenever it has anything of its own in these communions of different bodies which are separate from itself, it is most certainly in virtue of this which is its own in each of them that it, not they, has the power of generation. For neither is it their separation that generates, but what they have retained of the essence of the Church; and if they were to go on to abandon this, they would lose the power of generation. The generation, then, in each case proceeds from the Church, whose sacraments are retained, from which any such birth can alone in any case proceed,—although not all who receive its birth belong to its unity, which shall save those who persevere even to the end. Nor is it those only that do not belong to it who are openly guilty of the manifest sacrilege of schism, but also those who, being outwardly joined to its unity, are yet separated by a life of sin. For the Church had herself given birth to Simon Magus through the sacrament of baptism; and yet it was declared to him that he had no part in the inheritance of Christ. Did he lack anything in respect of baptism, of the gospel, of the sacraments? But in that he wanted charity, he was born in vain; and perhaps it had been well for him that he had never been born at all. Was anything wanting to their birth to whom the apostle says, “I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, even as babes in Christ”? Yet he recalls them from the sacrilege of schism, into which they were rushing, because they were carnal: “I have fed you,” he says, “with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men?” For of these he says above: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” These, therefore, if they continued in the same perverse obstinacy, were doubtless indeed born, but yet would not belong by the bond of peace and unity to the very Church in respect of which they were born. Therefore she herself bears them in her own womb

and in the womb of her handmaids, by virtue of the same sacraments, as though by virtue of the seed of her husband. For it is not without meaning that the apostle says that all these things were done by way of figure. But those who are too proud, and are not joined to their lawful mother, are like Ishmael, of whom it is said, “Cast out this bond-woman and her Son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.” But those who peacefully love the lawful wife of their father, whose sons they are by lawful descent, are like the sons of Jacob, born indeed of handmaids, but yet receiving the same inheritance. But those who are born within the family, of the womb of the mother herself, and then neglect the grace they have received, are like Isaac’s son Esau, who was rejected, God Himself bearing witness to it, and saying, “I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau;” and that though they were twin-brethren, the offspring of the same womb.

#### CHAPTER 11

15. They ask also, “Whether sins are remitted in baptism in the party of Donatus:” so that, if we say that they are remitted, they may answer, then the Holy Spirit is there; for when by the breathing of our Lord the Holy Spirit was given to the disciples, He then went on to say, “Baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” And if it is so, they say, then our communion is the Church of Christ; for the Holy Spirit does not work the remission of sins except in the Church. And if our communion is the Church of Christ, then your communion is not the Church of Christ. For that is one, wherever it is, of which it is said, “My dove is but one; she is the only one of her mother;” nor can there be just so many churches as there are schisms. But if we should say that sins are not there remitted, then, say they, there is no true baptism there; and therefore ought you to baptize those whom you receive from us. And since you do not do this, you confess that you are not in the Church of Christ

16. To these we reply, following the Scriptures, by asking them to answer themselves what they ask of us. For I beg them to tell us whether there is any remission of sins where there is not charity; for sins are the darkness of the soul. For we find St. John saying, “He that hateth his brother is still in

darkness.” But none would create schisms, if they were not blinded by hatred of their brethren. If, therefore, we say that sins are not remitted there, how is he regenerate who is baptized among them? And what is regeneration in baptism, except the being renovated from the corruption of the old man? And how can he be so renovated whose past sins are not remitted? But if he be not regenerate, neither does he put on Christ; from which it seems to follow that he ought to be baptized again. For the apostle says, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ;” and if he has not so put on Christ, neither should he be considered to have been baptized in Christ. Further, since we say that he has been baptized in Christ, we confess that he has put on Christ; and if we confess this, we confess that he is regenerate. And if this be so, how does St. John say, “He that hateth his brother remaineth still in darkness,” if remission of his sins has already taken place? Can it be that schism does not involve hatred of one’s brethren? Who will maintain this, when both the origin of, and perseverance in schism consists in nothing else save hatred of the brethren?

17. They think that they solve this question when they say: “There is then no remission of sins in schism, and therefore no creation of the new man by regeneration, and accordingly neither is there the baptism of Christ.” But since we confess that the baptism of Christ exists in schism, we propose this question to them for solution: Was Simon Magus endued with the true baptism of Christ? They will answer, Yes; being compelled to do so by the authority of holy Scripture. I ask them whether they confess that he received remission of his sins. They will certainly acknowledge it. So I ask why Peter said to him that he had no part in the lot of the saints. Because, they say, he sinned afterwards, wishing to buy with money the gift of God, which he believed the apostles were able to sell.

## CHAPTER 12

18. What if he approached baptism itself in deceit? were his sins remitted, or were they not? Let them choose which they will. Whichever they choose will answer our purpose. If they say they were remitted, how then shall “the Holy Spirit of discipline flee deceit,” if in him who was full of deceit He worked remission of sins? If they say they were not remitted, I ask whether,

if he should afterwards confess his sin with contrition of heart and true sorrow, it would be judged that he ought to be baptized again. And if it is mere madness to assert this, then let them confess that a man can be baptized with the true baptism of Christ, and that yet his heart, persisting in malice or sacrilege, may not allow remission of sins to be given; and so let them understand that men may be baptized in communions severed from the Church, in which Christ's baptism is given and received in the said celebration of the sacrament, but that it will only then be of avail for the remission of sins, when the recipient, being reconciled to the unity of the Church, is purged from the sacrilege of deceit, by which his sins were retained, and their remission prevented. For, as in the case of him who had approached the sacrament in deceit there is no second baptism, but he is purged by faithful discipline and truthful confession, which he could not be without baptism, so that what was given before becomes then powerful to work his salvation, when the former deceit is done away by the truthful confession; so also in the case of the man who, while an enemy to the peace and love of Christ, received in any heresy or schism the baptism of Christ, which the schismatics in question had not lost from among them, though by his sacrilege his sins were not remitted, yet, when he corrects his error, and comes over to the communion and unity of the Church, he ought not to be again baptized: because by his very reconciliation to the peace of the Church he receives this benefit, that the sacrament now begins in unity to be of avail for the remission of his sins, which could not so avail him as received in schism

19. But if they should say that in the man who has approached the sacrament in deceit, his sins are indeed removed by the holy power of so great a sacrament at the moment when he received it, but return immediately in consequence of his deceit: so that the Holy Spirit has both been present with him at his baptism for the removal of his sins, and has also fled before his perseverance in deceit so that they should return: so that both declarations prove true,—both, “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ;” and also, “The holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit;”—that is to say, that both the holiness of baptism clothes him with Christ, and the sinfulness of deceit strips him of Christ; like the case of a man who passes from darkness through light into darkness

again, his eyes being always directed towards darkness, though the light cannot but penetrate them as he passes;—if they should say this, let them understand that this is also the case with those who are baptized without the pale of the Church, but yet with the baptism of the Church, which is holy in itself, wherever it may be; and which therefore belongs not to those who separate themselves, but to the body from which they are separated; while yet it avails even among them so far, that they pass through its light back to their own darkness, their sins, which in that moment had been dispelled by the holiness of baptism, returning immediately upon them, as though it were the darkness returning which the light had dispelled while they were passing through it.

20. For that sins which have been remitted do return upon a man, where there is no brotherly love, is most clearly taught by our Lord, in the case of the servant whom He found owing Him ten thousand talents, and to whom He yet forgave all at his entreaty. But when he refused to have pity on his fellow-servant who owed him a hundred pence, the Lord commanded him to pay what He had forgiven him. The time, then, at which pardon is received through baptism is as it were the time for rendering accounts, so that all the debts which are found to be due may be remitted. Yet it was not afterwards that the servant lent his fellow-servant the money, which he had so pitilessly exacted when the other was unable to pay it; but his fellow-servant already owed him the debt, when he himself, on rendering his accounts to his master, was excused a debt of so vast an amount. He had not first excused his fellow-servant, and so come to receive forgiveness from his Lord. This is proved by the words of the fellow-servant: “Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.” Otherwise he would have said, “You forgave me it before; why do you again demand it?” This is made more clear by the words of the Lord Himself. For He says, “But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which was owing him a hundred pence.” He does not say, “To whom he had already forgiven a debt of a hundred pence.” Since then He says, “was owing him,” it is clear that he had not forgiven him the debt. And indeed it would have been better, and more in accordance with the position of a man who was going to render an account of so great a debt, and expected forbearance from his lord, that he should first have forgiven his fellow-servant what was due to him, and so



have come to render the account when there was such need for imploring the compassion of his lord. Yet the fact that he had not yet forgiven his fellow-servant, did not prevent his lord from forgiving him all his debts on the occasion of receiving his accounts. But what advantage was it to him, since they all immediately returned with redoubled force upon his head, in consequence of his persistent want of charity? So the grace of baptism is not prevented from giving remission of all sins, even if he to whom they are forgiven continues to cherish hatred towards his brother in his heart. For the guilt of yesterday is remitted, and all that was before it, nay, even the guilt of the very hour and moment previous to baptism, and during baptism itself. But then he immediately begins again to be responsible, not only for the days, hours, moments which ensue, but also for the past,—the guilt of all the sins which were remitted returning on him, as happens only too frequently in the Church.

#### CHAPTER 13

21. For it often happens that a man has an enemy whom he hates most unjustly; although we are commanded to love even our unjust enemies, and to pray for them. But in some sudden danger of death he begins to be uneasy, and desires baptism, which he receives in such haste, that the emergency scarcely admits of the necessary formal examination of a few words, much less of a long conversation, so that this hatred should be driven from his heart, even supposing it to be known to the minister who baptizes him. Certainly cases of this sort are still found to occur not only with us, but also with them. What shall we say then? Are this man's sins forgiven or not? Let them choose just which alternative they prefer. For if they are forgiven, they immediately return: this is the teaching of the gospel, the authoritative announcement of truth. Whether, therefore, they are forgiven or not, medicine is necessary afterwards; and yet if the man lives, and learns that his fault stands in need of correction, and corrects it, he is not baptized anew, either with them or with us. So in the points in which schismatics and heretics neither entertain different opinions nor observe different practice from ourselves, we do not correct them when they join us, but rather commend what we find in them. For where they do not differ from us, they are not separated from us. But because these things do

them no good so long as they are schismatics or heretics, on account of other points in which they differ from us, not to mention the most grievous sin that is involved in separation itself, therefore, whether their sins remain in them, or return again immediately after remission, in either case we exhort them to come to the soundness of peace and Christian charity, not only that they may obtain something which they had not before, but also that what they had may begin to be of use to them

#### CHAPTER 14

22. It is to no purpose, then, that they say to us, “If you acknowledge our baptism, what do we lack that should make you suppose that we ought to think seriously of joining your communion?” For we reply, We do not acknowledge any baptism of yours; for it is not the baptism of schismatics or heretics, but of God and of the Church, wheresoever it may be found, and whithersoever it may be transferred. But it is in no sense yours, except because you entertain false opinions, and do sacrilegious acts, and have impiously separated yourselves from the Church. For if everything else in your practice and opinions were true, and still you were to persist in this same separation, contrary to the bond of brotherly peace, contrary to the union of all the brethren, who have been manifest, according to the promise, in all the world; the particulars of whose history, and the secrets of whose hearts, you never could have known or considered in every case, so as to have a right to condemn them; who, moreover, cannot be liable to condemnation for submitting themselves to the judges of the Church rather than to one of the parties to the dispute,—in this one thing, at least, in such a case, you are deficient, in which he is deficient who lacks charity. Why should we go over our argument again? Look and see yourselves in the apostle, how much there is that you lack. For what does it matter to him who lacks charity, whether he be carried away outside the Church at once by some blast of temptation, or remain within the Lord’s harvest, so as to be separated only at the final winnowing? And yet even such, if they have once been born in baptism, need not be born again

#### CHAPTER 15

23. For it is the Church that gives birth to all, either within her pale, of her own womb; or beyond it, of the seed of her bridegroom,—(either of herself, or of her handmaid. ) But Esau, even though born of the lawful wife, was separated from the people of God because he quarrelled with his brother. And Asher, born indeed by the authority of a wife, but yet of a handmaid, was admitted to the land of promise on account of his brotherly good-will. Whence also it was not the being born of a handmaid, but his quarrelling with his brother, that stood in the way of Ishmael, to cause his separation from the people of God; and he received no benefit from the power of the wife, whose son he rather was, inasmuch as it was in virtue of her conjugal rights that he was both conceived in and born of the womb of the handmaid. Just as with the Donatists it is by the right of the Church, which exists in baptism, that whosoever is born receives his birth; but if they agree with their brethren, through the unity of peace they come to the land of promise, not to be again cast out from the bosom of their true mother, but to be acknowledged in the seed of their father; but if they persevere in discord, they will belong to the line of Ishmael. For Ishmael was first, and then Isaac; and Esau was the elder, Jacob the younger. Not that heresy gives birth before the Church, or that the Church herself gives birth first to those who are carnal or animal, and afterwards to those who are spiritual; but because, in the actual lot of our mortality, in which we are born of the seed of Adam, “that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual.” But from mere animal sensation, because “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,” arise all dissensions and schisms. And the apostle says that all who persevere in this animal sensation belong to the old covenant. that is, to the desire of earthly promises, which are indeed the type of the spiritual; but “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.”

24. At whatever time, therefore, men have begun to be of such a nature in this life, that, although they have partaken of such divine sacraments as were appointed for the dispensation under which they lived, they yet savor of carnal things, and hope for and desire carnal things from God, whether in this life or afterwards, they are yet carnal. But the Church, which is the people of God, is an ancient institution even in the pilgrimage of this life, having a carnal interest in some men, a spiritual interest in others. To the

carnal belongs the old covenant, to the spiritual the new. But in the first days both were hidden, from Adam even to Moses. But by Moses the old covenant was made manifest, and in it was hidden the new covenant, because after a secret fashion it was typified. But so soon as the Lord came in the flesh, the new covenant was revealed; yet, though the sacraments of the old covenant passed away; the dispositions peculiar to it did not pass away. For they still exist in those whom the apostle declares to be already born indeed by the sacrament of the new covenant, but yet capable, as being natural, of receiving the things of the Spirit of God. For, as in the sacraments of the old covenant some persons were already spiritual, belonging secretly to the new covenant, which was then concealed, so now also in the sacrament of the new covenant, which has been by this time revealed, many live who are natural. And if they will not advance to receive the things of the Spirit of God, to which the discourse of the apostle urges them, they will still belong to the old covenant. But if they advance, even before they receive them, yet by their very advance and approach they belong to the new covenant; and if, before becoming spiritual, they are snatched away from this life, yet through the protection of the holiness of the sacrament they are reckoned in the land of the living, where the Lord is our hope and our portion. Nor can I find any truer interpretation of the scripture, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect" considering what follows, "And in Thy book shall all be written."

#### CHAPTER 16

25. But the same mother which brought forth Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, brought forth also Moses and the prophets who succeeded him till the coming of our Lord; and the mother which gave birth to them gave birth also to our apostles and martyrs, and all good Christians. For all these that have appeared have been born indeed at different times, but are included in the society of our people; and it is as citizens of the same state that they have experienced the labors of this pilgrimage, and some of them are experiencing them, and others will experience them even to the end. Again, the mother who brought forth Cain, and Ham, and Ishmael, and Esau, brought forth also Dathan and others like him in the same people; and she who gave birth to them gave birth also to Judas the false apostle, and

Simon Magus, and all the other false Christians who up to this time have persisted obstinately in their carnal affections, whether they have been mingled in the unity of the Church, or separated from it in open schism. But when men of this kind have the gospel preached to them, and receive the sacraments at the hand of those who are spiritual, it is as though Rebecca gave birth to them of her own womb, as she did to Esau; but when they are produced in the midst of the people of God through the instrumentality of those who preach the gospel not sincerely, Sarah is indeed the mother, but through Hagar. So when good spiritual disciples are produced by the preaching or baptism of those who are carnal, Leah, indeed, or Rachel, gives birth to them in her right as wife, but from the womb of a handmaid. But when good and faithful disciples are born of those who are spiritual in the gospel, and either attain to the development of spiritual age, or do not cease to strive in that direction, or are only deterred from doing so by want of power, these are born like Isaac from the womb of Sarah, or Jacob from the womb of Rebecca, in the new life and the new covenant

#### CHAPTER 17

26. Therefore, whether they seem to abide within, or are openly outside, whatsoever is flesh is flesh, and what is chaff is chaff, whether they persevere in remaining in their barrenness on the threshing-floor, or, when temptation befalls them, are carried out as it were by the blast of some wind. And even that man is always severed from the unity of the Church which is without spot or wrinkle, who associates with the congregation of the saints in carnal obstinacy. Yet we ought to despair of no man, whether he be one who shows himself to be of this nature within the pale of the Church, or whether he more openly opposes it from without. But the spiritual, or those who are steadily advancing with pious exertion towards this end, do not stray without the pale; since even when, by some perversity or necessity among men, they seem to be driven forth, they are more approved than if they had remained within, since they are in no degree roused to contend against the Church, but remain rooted in the strongest foundation of Christian charity on the solid rock of unity. For hereunto belongs what is said in the sacrifice of Abraham: "But the birds divided he not."

27. On the question of baptism, then, I think that I have argued at sufficient length; and since this is a most manifest schism which is called by the name of the Donatists, it only remains that on the subject of baptism we should believe with pious faith what the universal Church maintains, apart from the sacrilege of schism. And yet, if within the Church different men still held different opinions on the point, without meanwhile violating peace, then till some one clear and simple decree should have been passed by an universal Council, it would have been right for the charity which seeks for unity to throw a veil over the error of human infirmity, as it is written “For charity shall cover the multitude of sins.” For, seeing that its absence causes the presence of all other things to be of no avail, we may well suppose that in its presence there is found pardon for the absence of some missing things

28. There are great proofs of this existing on the part of the blessed martyr Cyprian, in his letters,—to come at last to him of whose authority they carnally flatter themselves they are possessed, whilst by his love they are spiritually overthrown. For at that time, before the consent of the whole Church had declared authoritatively, by the decree of a plenary Council, what practice should be followed in this matter, it seemed to him, in common with about eighty of his fellow bishops of the African churches, that every man who had been baptized outside the communion of the Catholic Church should, on joining the Church, be baptized anew. And I take it, that the reason why the Lord did not reveal the error in this to a man of such eminence, was, that his pious humility and charity in guarding the peace and health of the Church might be made manifest, and might be noticed, so as to serve as an example of healing power, so to speak, not only to Christians of that age, but also to those who should come after. For when a bishop of so important a Church, himself a man of so great merit and virtue, endowed with such excellence of heart and power of eloquence, entertained an opinion about baptism different from that which was to be confirmed by a more diligent searching into the truth; though many of his colleagues held what was not yet made manifest by authority, but was sanctioned by the past custom of the Church, and afterwards embraced by the whole Catholic world; yet under these circumstances he did not sever himself, by refusal of communion, from the others who thought differently,

and indeed never ceased to urge on the others that they should “forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” For so, while the framework of the body remained whole, if any infirmity occurred in certain of its members, it might rather regain its health from their general soundness, than be deprived of the chance of any healing care by their death in severance from the body. And if he had severed himself, how many were there to follow! what a name was he likely to make for himself among men! how much more widely would the name of Cyprianist have spread than that of Donatist! But he was not a son of perdition, one of those of whom it is said, “Thou castedst them down while they were elevated;” but he was the son of the peace of the Church, who in the clear illumination of his mind failed to see one thing, only that through him another thing might be more excellently seen. “And yet,” says the apostle, “show I unto you a more excellent way: though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” He had therefore imperfect insight into the hidden mystery of the sacrament. But if he had known the mysteries of all sacraments, without having charity, it would have been nothing. But as he, with imperfect insight into the mystery, was careful to preserve charity with all courage and humility and faith, he deserved to come to the crown of martyrdom; so that, if any cloud had crept over the clearness of his intellect from his infirmity as man, it might be dispelled by the glorious brightness of his blood. For it was not in vain that our Lord Jesus Christ, when He declared Himself to be the vine, and His disciples, as it were, the branches in the vine, gave command that those which bare no fruit should be cut off, and removed from the vine as useless branches. But what is really fruit, save that new offspring, of which He further says, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another?” This is that very charity, without which the rest profiteth nothing. The apostle also says: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;” which all begin with charity, and with the rest of the combination forms one unity in a kind of wondrous cluster. Nor is it again in vain that our Lord added, “And every branch that beareth fruit, my Father purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit,” but because those who are strong in the fruit of charity may yet have something which requires purging, which the Husbandman will not leave untended.

Whilst then, that holy man entertained on the subject of baptism an opinion at variance with the true view, which was afterwards thoroughly examined and confirmed after most diligent consideration, his error was compensated by his remaining in catholic unity, and by the abundance of his charity; and finally it was cleared away by the pruning-hook of martyrdom.

## CHAPTER 19

29. But that I may not seem to be uttering these praises of the blessed martyr (which, indeed, are not his, but rather those of Him by whose grace he showed himself what he was), in order to escape the burden of proof, let us now bring forward from his letters the testimony by which the mouths of the Donatists may most of all be stopped. For they advance his authority before the unlearned, to show that in a manner they do well when they baptize afresh the faithful who come to them. Too wretched are they—and, unless they correct themselves, even by themselves are they utterly condemned—who choose in the example set them by so great a man to imitate just that fault, which only did not injure him, because he walked with constant steps even to the end in that from which they have strayed who “have not known the way of peace.” It is true that Christ’s baptism is holy; and although it may exist among heretics or schismatics, yet it does not belong to the heresy or schism; and therefore even those who come from thence to the Catholic Church herself ought not to be baptized afresh. Yet to err on this point is one thing; it is another thing that those who are straying from the peace of the Church, and have fallen headlong into the pit of schism, should go on to decide that any who join them ought to be baptized again. For the former is a speck on the brightness of a holy soul which abundance of charity would fain have covered; the latter is a stain in their nether foulness which the hatred of peace in their countenance ostentatiously brings to light. But the subject for our further consideration, relating to the authority of the blessed Cyprian, we will commence from a fresh beginning



## Book II

In which Augustin proves that it is to no purpose that the Donatists bring forward the authority of Cyprian, bishop and martyr, since it is really more opposed to them than to the Catholics. For that he held that the view of his predecessor Agrippinus, on the subject of baptizing heretics in the Catholic Church when they join its communion, should only be received on condition that peace should be maintained with those who entertained the opposite view, and that the unity of the Church should never be broken by any kind of schism.

### CHAPTER I

1. How much the arguments make for us, that is, for catholic peace, which the party of Donatus profess to bring forward against us from the authority of the blessed Cyprian, and how much they prove against those who bring them forward, it is my intention, with the help of God, to show in the ensuing book. If, therefore, in the course of my argument, I am obliged to repeat what I have already said in other treatises (although I will do so as little as I can,) yet this ought not to be objected to by those who have already read them and agree with them; since it is not only right that those things which are necessary for instruction should be frequently instilled into men of dull intelligence, but even in the case of those who are endowed with larger understanding, it contributes very much both to make their learning easier and their powers of teaching readier, where the same points are handled and discussed in many various ways. For I know how much it discourages a reader, when he comes upon any knotty question in the book which he has in hand, to find himself presently referred for its solution to another which he happens not to have. Wherefore, if I am compelled, by the urgency of the present questions, to repeat what I have already said in other books, I would seek forgiveness from those who know those books already,

that those who are ignorant may have their difficulties removed; for it is better to give to one who has already, than to abstain from satisfying any one who is in want

2. What, then, do they venture to say, when their mouth is closed by the force of truth, with which they will not agree? “Cyprian,” say they, “whose great merits and vast learning we all know, decreed in a Council, with many of his fellow-bishops contributing their several opinions, that all heretics and schismatics, that is, all who are severed from the communion of the one Church, are without baptism; and therefore, whosoever has joined the communion of the Church after being baptized by them must be baptized in the Church.” The authority of Cyprian does not alarm me, because I am reassured by his humility. We know, indeed, the great merit of the bishop and martyr Cyprian; but is it in any way greater than that of the apostle and martyr Peter, of whom the said Cyprian speaks as follows in his epistle to Quintus? “For neither did Peter, whom the Lord chose first, and on whom He built His Church, when Paul afterwards disputed with him about circumcision, claim or assume anything insolently and arrogantly to himself, so as to say that he held the primacy, and should rather be obeyed of those who were late and newly come. Nor did he despise Paul because he had before been a persecutor of the Church, but he admitted the counsel of truth, and readily assented to the legitimate grounds which Paul maintained; giving us thereby a pattern of concord and patience, that we should not pertinaciously love our own opinions, but should rather account as our own any true and rightful suggestions of our brethren and colleagues for the common health and weal.” Here is a passage in which Cyprian records what we also learn in holy Scripture, that the Apostle Peter, in whom the primacy of the apostles shines with such exceeding grace, was corrected by the later Apostle Paul, when he adopted a custom in the matter of circumcision at variance with the demands of truth. If it was therefore possible for Peter in some point to walk not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, so as to compel the Gentiles to judaize, as Paul writes in that epistle in which he calls God to witness that he does not lie; for he says, “Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not;” and, after this sacred and awful calling of God to witness, he told the whole tale, saying in the course of it, “But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth

of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”—if Peter, I say, could compel the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews, contrary to the rule of truth which the Church afterwards held, why might not Cyprian, in opposition to the rule of faith which the whole Church afterwards held, compel heretics and schismatics to be baptized afresh? I suppose that there is no slight to Cyprian in comparing him with Peter in respect to his crown of martyrdom; rather I ought to be afraid lest I am showing disrespect towards Peter. For who can be ignorant that the primacy of his apostleship is to be preferred to any episcopate whatever? But, granting the difference in the dignity of their sees, yet they have the same glory in their martyrdom. And whether it may be the case that the hearts of those who confess and die for the true faith in the unity of charity take precedence of each other in different points, the Lord Himself will know, by the hidden and wondrous dispensation of whose grace the thief hanging on the cross once for all confesses Him, and is sent on the selfsame day to paradise, while Peter, the follower of our Lord, denies Him thrice, and has his crown postponed: for us it were rash to form a judgment from the evidence. But if any one were now found compelling a man to be circumcised after the Jewish fashion, as a necessary preliminary for baptism, this would meet with much more general repudiation by mankind, than if a man should be compelled to be baptized again. Wherefore, if Peter, on doing this, is corrected by his later colleague Paul, and is yet preserved by the bond of peace and unity till he is promoted to martyrdom, how much more readily and constantly should we prefer, either to the authority of a single bishop, or to the Council of a single province, the rule that has been established by the statutes of the universal Church? For this same Cyprian, in urging his view of the question, was still anxious to remain in the unity of peace even with those who differed from him on this point, as is shown by his own opening address at the beginning of the very Council which is quoted by the Donatists. For it is as follows:

## CHAPTER 2

3. “When, on the calends of September, very many bishops from the provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania, with their presbyters and

deacons, had met together at Carthage, a great part of the laity also being present; and when the letter addressed by Jubaianus to Cyprian, as also the answer of Cyprian to Jubaianus, on the subject of baptizing heretics, had been read, Cyprian said: Ye have heard, most beloved colleagues, what Jubaianus, our fellow-bishop, has written to me, consulting my moderate ability concerning the unlawful and profane baptism of heretics, and what answer I gave him,—giving a judgment which we have once and again and often given, that heretics coming to the Church ought to be baptized, and sanctified with the baptism of the Church. Another letter of Jubaianus has likewise been read to you, in which, agreeably to his sincere and religious devotion, in answer to our epistle, he not only expressed his assent, but returned thanks also, acknowledging that he had received instruction. It remains that we severally declare our opinion on this subject, judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us. For no one of us sets himself up as a bishop of bishops, or, by tyrannical terror, forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying, inasmuch as every bishop, in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of forming his own judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another. But we must all await the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone has the power both of setting us in the government of His Church, and of judging of our acts therein.’“

### CHAPTER 3

4. Now let the proud and swelling necks of the heretics raise themselves, if they dare, against the holy humility of this address. Ye mad Donatists, whom we desire earnestly to return to the peace and unity of the holy Church, that ye may receive health therein, what have ye to say in answer to this? You are wont, indeed, to bring up against us the letters of Cyprian, his opinion, his Council; why do ye claim the authority of Cyprian for your schism, and reject his example when it makes for the peace of the Church? But who can fail to be aware that the sacred canon of Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, is confined within its own limits, and that it stands so absolutely in a superior position to all later letters of the bishops, that about it we can hold no manner of doubt or disputation whether what is confessedly contained in it is right and true; but that all the letters of

bishops which have been written, or are being written, since the closing of the canon, are liable to be refuted if there be anything contained in them which strays from the truth, either by the discourse of some one who happens to be wiser in the matter than themselves, or by the weightier authority and more learned experience of other bishops, by the authority of Councils; and further, that the Councils themselves, which are held in the several districts and provinces, must yield, beyond all possibility of doubt, to the authority of plenary Councils which are formed for the whole Christian world; and that even of the plenary Councils, the earlier are often corrected by those which follow them, when, by some actual experiment, things are brought to light which were before concealed, and that is known which previously lay hid, and this without any whirlwind of sacrilegious pride, without any puffing of the neck through arrogance, without any strife of envious hatred, simply with holy humility, catholic peace, and Christian charity?

#### CHAPTER 4

5. Wherefore the holy Cyprian, whose dignity is only increased by his humility, who so loved the pattern set by Peter as to use the words, “Giving us thereby a pattern of concord and patience, that we should not pertinaciously love our own opinions, but should rather account as our own any true and rightful suggestions of our brethren and colleagues, for the common health and weal,”—he, I say, abundantly shows that he was most willing to correct his own opinion, if any one should prove to him that it is as certain that the baptism of Christ can be given by those who have strayed from the fold, as that it could not be lost when they strayed; on which subject we have already said much. Nor should we ourselves venture to assert anything of the kind, were we not supported by the unanimous authority of the whole Church, to which he himself would unquestionably have yielded, if at that time the truth of this question had been placed beyond dispute by the investigation and decree of a plenary Council. For if he quotes Peter as an example for his allowing himself quietly and peacefully to be corrected by one junior colleague, how much more readily would he himself, with the Council of his province, have yielded to the authority of the whole world, when the truth had been thus brought to light?

For, indeed, so holy and peaceful a soul would have been most ready to assent to the arguments of any single person who could prove to him the truth; and perhaps he even did so, though we have no knowledge of the fact. For it was neither possible that all the proceedings which took place between the bishops at that time should have been committed to writing, nor are we acquainted with all that was so committed. For how could a matter which was involved in such mists of disputation even have been brought to the full illumination and authoritative decision of a plenary Council, had it not first been known to be discussed for some considerable time in the various districts of the world, with many discussions and comparisons of the views of the bishop on every side? But this is one effect of the soundness of peace, that when any doubtful points are long under investigation, and when, on account of the difficulty of arriving at the truth, they produce difference of opinion in the course of brotherly disputation, till men at last arrive at the unalloyed truth; yet the bond of unity remains, lest in the part that is cut away there should be found the incurable wound of deadly error

## CHAPTER 5

6. And so it is that often something is imperfectly revealed to the more learned, that their patient and humble charity, from which proceeds the greater fruit, may be proved, either in the way in which they preserve unity, when they hold different opinions on matters of comparative obscurity, or in the temper with which they receive the truth, when they learn that it has been declared to be contrary to what they thought. And of these two we have a manifestation in the blessed Cyprian of the one, viz., of the way in which he preserved unity with those from whom he differed in opinion. For he says, "Judging no one nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us." And the other, viz., in what temper he could receive the truth when found to be different from what he thought it, though his letters are silent on the point, is yet proclaimed by his merits. If there is no letter extant to prove it, it is witnessed by his crown of martyrdom; if the Council of bishops declare it not, it is declared by the host of angels. For it is no small proof of a most peaceful soul, that he won the crown of martyrdom in that unity from which he would not separate, even though he

differed from it. For we are but men; and it is therefore a temptation incident to men that we should hold views at variance with the truth on any point. But to come through too great love for our own opinion, or through jealousy of our betters, even to the sacrilege of dividing the communion of the Church, and of founding heresy or schism, is a presumption worthy of the devil. But never in any point to entertain an opinion at variance with the truth is perfection found only in the angels. Since then we are men, yet forasmuch as in hope we are angels, whose equals we shall be in the resurrection, at any rate, so long as we are wanting in the perfection of angels, let us at least be without the presumption of the devil. Accordingly the apostle says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." It is therefore part of man's nature to be sometimes wrong. Wherefore he says in another place, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." But to whom does He reveal it when it is His will (be it in this life or in the life to come), save to those who walk in the way of peace, and stray not aside into any schism? Not to such as those who have not known the way of peace, or for some other cause have broken the bond of unity. And so, when the apostle said, "And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you," lest they should think that besides the way of peace their own wrong views might be revealed to them, he immediately added, "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule." And Cyprian, walking by this rule, by the most persistent tolerance, not simply by the shedding of his blood, but because it was shed in unity (for if he gave his body to be burned, and had not charity, it would profit him nothing ), came by the confession of martyrdom to the light of the angels, and if not before, at least then, acknowledged the revelation of the truth on that point on which, while yet in error, he did not prefer the maintenance of a wrong opinion to the bond of unity

## CHAPTER 6

7. What then, ye Donatists, what have ye to say to this? If our opinion about baptism is true, yet all who thought differently in the time of Cyprian were not cut off from the unity of the Church, till God revealed to them the truth

of the point on which they were in error, why then have ye by your sacrilegious separation broken the bond of peace? But if yours is the true opinion about baptism, Cyprian and the others, in conjunction with whom ye set forth that he held such a Council, remained in unity with those who thought otherwise; why, therefore, have ye broken the bond of peace? Choose which alternative ye will, ye are compelled to pronounce an opinion against your schism. Answer me, wherefore have ye separated yourselves? Wherefore have ye erected an altar in opposition to the whole world? Wherefore do ye not communicate with the Churches to which apostolic epistles have been sent, which you yourselves read and acknowledge, in accordance with whose tenor you say that you order your lives? Answer me, wherefore have ye separated yourselves? I suppose in order that ye might not perish by communion with wicked men. How then was it that Cyprian, and so many of his colleagues, did not perish? For though they believed that heretics and schismatics did not possess baptism, yet they chose rather to hold communion with them when they had been received into the Church without baptism, although they believed that their flagrant and sacrilegious sins were yet upon their heads, than to be separated from the unity of the Church, according to the words of Cyprian, “Judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us.”

8. If, therefore, by such communion with the wicked the just cannot but perish, the Church had already perished in the time of Cyprian. Whence then sprang the origin of Donatus? where was he taught, where was he baptized, where was he ordained, since the Church had been already destroyed by the contagion of communion with the wicked? But if the Church still existed, the wicked could do no harm to the good in one communion with them. Wherefore did ye separate yourselves? Behold, I see in unity Cyprian and others, his colleagues, who, on holding a council, decided that those who have been baptized without the communion of the Church have no true baptism, and that therefore it must be given them when they join the Church. But again, behold I see in the same unity that certain men think differently in this matter, and that, recognizing in those who come from heretics and schismatics the baptism of Christ, they do not venture to baptize them afresh. All of these catholic unity embraces in her motherly breast, bearing each other’s burdens by turns, and endeavoring to



keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, till God should reveal to one or other of them any error in their views. If the one party held the truth, were they infected by the others, or no? If the others held the truth, were they infected by the first, or no? Choose which ye will. If there was contamination, the Church even then ceased to exist; answer me, therefore, whence came ye forth hither? But if the Church remained, the good are in no wise contaminated by the bad in such communion; answer me, therefore, why did ye break the bond?

9. Or is it perhaps that schismatics, when received without baptism, bring no infection, but that it is brought by those who deliver up the sacred books? For that there were traditors of your number is proved by the clearest testimony of history. And if you had then brought true evidence against those whom you were accusing, you would have proved your cause before the unity of the whole world, so that you would have been retained whilst they were shut out. And if you endeavored to do this, and did not succeed, the world is not to blame, which trusted the judges of the Church rather than the beaten parties in the suit; whilst, if you would not urge your suit, the world again is not to blame, which could not condemn men without their cause being heard. Why, then, did you separate yourselves from the innocent? You cannot defend the sacrilege of your schism. But this I pass over. But so much I say, that if the traditors could have defiled you, who were not convicted by you, and by whom, on the contrary, you were beaten, much more could the sacrilege of schismatics and heretics, received into the Church, as you maintain, without baptism, have defiled Cyprian. Yet he did not separate himself. And inasmuch as the Church continued to exist, it is clear that it could not be defiled. Wherefore, then, did you separate yourselves, I do not say from the innocent, as the facts proved them, but from the traditors, as they were never proved to be? Are the sins of traditors, as I began to say, heavier than those of schismatics? Let us not bring in deceitful balances, to which we may hang what weights we will and how we will, saying to suit ourselves, "This is heavy and this is light;" but let us bring forward the sacred balance out of holy Scripture, as out of the Lord's treasure-house, and let us weigh them by it, to see which is the heavier; or rather, let us not weigh them for ourselves, but read the weights as declared by the Lord. At the time when the Lord showed, by the example

of recent punishment, that there was need to guard against the sins of olden days, and an idol was made and worshipped, and the prophetic book was burned by the wrath of a scoffing king, and schism was attempted, the idolatry was punished with the sword, the burning of the book by slaughter in war and captivity in a foreign land, schism by the earth opening, and swallowing up alive the leaders of the schism while the rest were consumed with fire from heaven. Who will now doubt that that was the worse crime which received the heavier punishment? If men coming from such sacrilegious company, without baptism, as you maintain, could not defile Cyprian, how could those defile you who were not convicted but supposed betrayers of the sacred books? For if they had not only given up the books to be burned, but had actually burned them with their own hands, they would have been guilty of a less sin than if they had committed schism; for schism is visited with the heavier, the other with the lighter punishment, not at man's discretion, but by the judgment of God.

#### CHAPTER 7

10. Wherefore, then, have ye severed yourselves? If there is any sense left in you, you must surely see that you can find no possible answer to these arguments. "We are not left," they say, "so utterly without resource, but that we can still answer, It is our will. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." They do not understand that this was said to men who were wishing to judge, not of open facts, but of the hearts of other men. For how does the apostle himself come to say so much about the sins of schisms and heresies? Or how comes that verse in the Psalms, "If of a truth ye love justice, judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?" But why does the Lord Himself say, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment," if we may not judge any man? Lastly, why, in the case of those traditors, whom they have judged unrighteously, have they themselves ventured to pass any judgments at all on another man's servants? To their own master they were standing or falling. Or why, in the case of the recent followers of Maximianus, have they not hesitated to bring forward the judgment delivered with the infallible voice, as they aver, of a plenary Council, in such terms as to compare them with those first schismatics whom the earth swallowed up

alive? And yet some of them, as they cannot deny, they either condemned though innocent, or received back again in their guilt. But when a truth is urged which they cannot gainsay, they mutter a truly wholesome murmuring: "It is our will: Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." "But when a weak sheep is espied in the desert, and the pastor who should reclaim it to the fold is nowhere to be seen, then there is setting of teeth, and breaking of the weak neck: "Thou wouldst be a good man, wert thou not a traditor. Consult the welfare of thy soul; be a Christian." What unconscionable madness! When it is said to a Christian, "Be a Christian," what other lesson is taught, save a denial that he is a Christian? Was it not the same lesson which those persecutors of the Christians wished to teach, by resisting whom the crown of martyrdom was gained? Or must we even look on crime as lighter when committed with threatening of the sword than with treachery of the tongue?

11. Answer me this, ye ravening wolves, who, seeking to be clad in sheep's clothing, think that the letters of the blessed Cyprian are in your favor. Did the sacrilege of schismatics defile Cyprian, or did it not? If it did, the Church perished from that instant, and there remained no source from which ye might spring. If it did not, then by what offense on the part of others can the guiltless possibly be defiled, if the sacrilege of schism cannot defile them? Wherefore, then, have ye severed yourselves? Wherefore, while shunning the lighter offenses, which are inventions of your own, have ye committed the heaviest offense of all, the sacrilege of schism? Will ye now perchance confess that those men were no longer schismatics or heretics who had been baptized without the communion of the Church, or in some heresy or schism, because by coming over to the Church, and renouncing their former errors, they had ceased to be what formerly they were? How then was it, that though they were not baptized, their sins remained not on their heads? Was it that the baptism was Christ's, but that it could not profit them without the communion of the Church; yet when they came over, and, renouncing their past error, were received into the communion of the Church by the laying on of hands, then, being now rooted and founded in charity, without which all other things are profitless, they began to receive profit for the remission of sins and the sanctification

of their lives from that sacrament, which, while without the pale of the Church, they possessed in vain?

12. Cease, then, to bring forward against us the authority of Cyprian in favor of repeating baptism, but cling with us to the example of Cyprian for the preservation of unity. For this question of baptism had not been as yet completely worked out, but yet the Church observed the most wholesome custom of correcting what was wrong, not repeating what was already given, even in the case of schismatics and heretics: she healed the wounded part, but did not meddle with what was whole. And this custom, coming, I suppose, from apostolical tradition (like many other things which are held to have been handed down under their actual sanction, because they are preserved throughout the whole Church, though they are not found either in their letters, or in the Councils of their successors),—this most wholesome custom, I say, according to the holy Cyprian, began to be what is called amended by his predecessor Agrippinus. But, according to the teaching which springs from a more careful investigation into the truth, which, after great doubt and fluctuation, was brought at last to the decision of a plenary Council, we ought to believe that it rather began to be corrupted than to receive correction at the hands of Agrippinus. Accordingly, when so great a question forced itself upon him, and it was difficult to decide the point, whether remission of sins and man's spiritual regeneration could take place among heretics or schismatics, and the authority of Agrippinus was there to guide him, with that of some few men who shared in his misapprehension of this question, having preferred attempting something new to maintaining a custom which they did not understand how to defend; under these circumstances considerations of probability forced themselves into the eyes of his soul, and barred the way to the thorough investigation of the truth.

## CHAPTER 8

13. Nor do I think that the blessed Cyprian had any other motive in the free expression and earlier utterance of what he thought in opposition to the custom of the Church, save that he should thankfully receive any one that could be found with a fuller revelation of the truth, and that he should show forth a pattern for imitation, not only of diligence in teaching, but also of modesty in learning; but that, if no one should be found to bring forward

any argument by which those considerations of probability should be refuted, then he should abide by his opinion, with the full consciousness that he had neither concealed what he conceived to be the truth, nor violated the unity which he loved. For so he understood the words of the apostle: "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace." "In which passage he has taught and shown, that many things are revealed to individuals for the better, and that we ought not each to strive pertinaciously for what he has once imbibed and held, but if anything has appeared better and more useful, he should willingly embrace it." At any rate, in these words he not only advised those to agree with him who saw no better course, but also exhorted any who could to bring forward arguments by which the maintenance of the former custom might rather be established; that if they should be of such a nature as not to admit of refutation, he might show in his own person with what sincerity he said "that we ought not each to strive pertinaciously for what he has once imbibed and held, but that, if anything has appeared better and more useful, he should willingly embrace it." But inasmuch as none appeared, except such as simply urged the custom against him, and the arguments which they produced in its favor were not of a kind to bring conviction to a soul like his, this mighty reasoner was not content to give up his opinions, which, though they were not true, as he was himself unable to see, were at any rate not confuted, in favor of a custom which had truth on its side, but had not yet been confirmed. And yet, had not his predecessor Agrippinus, and some of his fellow-bishops throughout Africa, first tempted him to desert this custom, even by the decision of a Council, he certainly would not have dared to argue against it. But, amid the perplexities of so obscure a question, and seeing everywhere around him a strong universal custom, he would rather have put restraint upon himself by prayer and stretching forth his mind towards God, so as to have perceived or taught that for truth which was afterwards decided by a plenary Council. But when he had found relief amid his weariness in the authority of the former Council which was held by Agrippinus, he preferred maintaining what was in a manner the discovery of his predecessors, to expending further toil in investigation. For, at the end of his letter to Quintus, he thus shows how he has sought repose, if one may use the expression, for his weariness, in what might be termed the resting-place of authority

## CHAPTER 9

14. “This, moreover,” says he, “Agrippinus, a man of excellent memory, with the rest, bishops with him, who at that time governed the Church of the Lord in the province of Africa and Numidia, did establish and, after the investigation of a mutual Council had weighed it, confirm; whose sentence, being both religious and legitimate and salutary in accordance with the Catholic faith and Church, we also have followed.” By this witness he gives sufficient proof how much more ready he would have been to bear his testimony, had any Council been held to discuss this matter which either embraced the whole Church, or at least represented our brethren beyond the sea. But such a Council had not yet been held, because the whole world was bound together by the powerful bond of custom; and this was deemed sufficient to oppose to those who wished to introduce what was new, because they could not comprehend the truth. Afterwards, however, while the question became matter for discussion and investigation amongst many on either side, the new practice was not only invented, but even submitted to the authority and power of a plenary Council,—after the martyrdom of Cyprian, it is true, but before we were born. But that this was indeed the custom of the Church, which afterwards was confirmed by a plenary Council, in which the truth was brought to light, and many difficulties cleared away, is plain enough from the words of the blessed Cyprian himself in that same letter to Jubaianus, which was quoted as being read in the Council. For he says, “But some one asks, What then will be done in the case of those who, coming out of heresy to the Church, have already been admitted without baptism?” where certainly he shows plainly enough what was usually done, though he would have wished it otherwise; and in the very fact of his quoting the Council of Agrippinus, he clearly proves that the custom of the Church was different. Nor indeed was it requisite that he should seek to establish the practice by this Council, if it was already sanctioned by custom; and in the Council itself some of the speakers expressly declare, in giving their opinion, that they went against the custom of the Church in deciding what they thought was right. Wherefore let the Donatists consider this one point, which surely none can fail to see, that if the authority of Cyprian is to be followed, it is to be followed rather in maintaining unity than in altering the custom of the Church; but if respect is

paid to his Council, it must at any rate yield place to the later Council of the universal Church, of which he rejoiced to be a member, often warning his associates that they should all follow his example in upholding the coherence of the whole body. For both later Councils are preferred among later generations to those of earlier date; and the whole is always, with good reason, looked upon as superior to the parts

#### CHAPTER 10

15. But what attitude do they assume, when it is shown that the holy Cyprian, though he did not himself admit as members of the Church those who had been baptized in heresy or schism, yet held communion with those who did admit them, according to his express declaration, “Judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us?” If he was polluted by communion with persons of this kind, why do they follow his authority in the question of baptism? But if he was not polluted by communion with them, why do they not follow his example in maintaining unity? Have they anything to urge in their defense except the plea, “We choose to have it so?” What other answer have any sinful or wicked men to the discourse of truth or justice,—the voluptuous, for instance, the drunkards, adulterers, and those who are impure in any way, thieves, robbers, murderers, plunderers, evil-doers, idolaters,—what other answer can they make when convicted by the voice of truth, except “I choose to do it;” “It is my pleasure so”? And if they have in them a tinge of Christianity, they say further, “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant?” Yet these have so much more remains of modesty, that when, in accordance with divine and human law, they meet with punishment for their abandoned life and deeds, they do not style themselves martyrs; while the Donatists wish at once to lead a sacrilegious life and enjoy a blameless reputation, to suffer no punishment for their wicked deeds, and to gain a martyr’s glory in their just punishment. As if they were not experiencing the greater mercy and patience of God, in proportion as “executing His judgments upon them by little and little, He giveth them place of repentance,” and ceases not to redouble His scourgings in this life; that, considering what they suffer, and why they suffer it, they may in time grow wise; and that those who have received the baptism of the party of Maximianus in order to preserve the

unity of Donatus, may the more readily embrace the baptism of the whole world in order to preserve the peace of Christ; that they may be restored to the root, may be reconciled to the unity of the Church, may see that they have nothing left for them to say, though something yet remains for them to do; that for their former deeds the sacrifice of loving-kindness may be offered to a long-suffering God, whose unity they have broken by their wicked sin, on whose sacraments they have inflicted such a lasting wrong. For “the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy and truth.” Let them embrace His mercy and long-suffering in this life, and fear His truth in the next. For He willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his way and live; because He bends His judgment against the wrongs that have been inflicted on Him. This is our exhortation

#### CHAPTER 11

16. For this reason, then, we hold them to be enemies, because we speak the truth, because we are afraid to be silent, because we fear to shrink from pressing our point with all the force that lies within our power, because we obey the apostle when he says, “Preach the word; be instant in season out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort.” But, as the gospel says, “They love the praise of men more than the praise of God;” and while they fear to incur blame for a time, they do not fear to incur damnation for ever. They see, too, themselves what wrong they are doing; they see that they have no answer which they can make, but they overspread the inexperienced with mists, whilst they themselves are being swallowed up alive,—that is, are perishing knowingly and willfully. They see that men are amazed, and look with abhorrence on the fact that they have divided themselves into many schisms, especially in Carthage, the capital and most noted city of all Africa; they have endeavored to patch up the disgrace of their rags. Thinking that they could annihilate the followers of Maximianus, they pressed heavily on them through the agency of Optatus the Gildonian; they inflicted on them many wrongs amid the cruellest of persecutions. Then they received back some, thinking that all could be converted under the influence of the same terror; but they were unwilling to do those whom they received the wrong of baptizing afresh those who had been baptized by them in their schism, or rather of causing them to be baptized again within



their communion by the very same men by whom they had been baptized outside, and thus they at once made an exception to their own impious custom. They feel how wickedly they are acting in assailing the baptism of the whole world, when they have received the baptism of the followers of Maximianus. But they fear those whom they have themselves rebaptized, lest they should receive no mercy from them, when they have shown it to others; lest these should call them to account for their souls when they have ceased to destroy those of other men

## CHAPTER 12

17. What answer they can give about the followers of Maximianus whom they have received, they cannot divine. If they say, "Those we received were innocent," the answer is obvious, "Then you had condemned the innocent." If they say, "We did it in ignorance," then you judged rashly (just as you passed a rash judgment on the traditors), and your declaration was false that "you must know that they were condemned by the truthful voice of a plenary Council." For indeed the innocent could never be condemned by a voice of truth. If they say, "We did not condemn them," it is only necessary to cite the Council, to cite the names of bishops and states alike. If they say, "The Council itself is none of ours," then we cite the records of the proconsular province, where more than once they quoted the same Council to justify the exclusion of the followers of Maximianus from the basilicas, and to confound them by the din of the judges and the force of their allies. If they say that Felicianus of Musti, and Praetextatus of Assavae, whom they afterwards received, were not of the party of Maximianus, then we cite the records in which they demanded, in the courts of law, that these persons should be excluded from the Council which they held against the party of Maximianus. If they say, "They were received for the sake of peace," our answer is, "Why then do ye not acknowledge the only true and full peace? Who urged you, who compelled you to receive a schismatic whom you had condemned, to preserve the peace of Donatus, and to condemn the world unheard, in violation of the peace of Christ?" Truth hems them in on every side. They see that there is no answer left for them to make, and they think that there is nothing left for them to do; they cannot find out what to say. They are not allowed to be silent. They had

rather strive with perverse utterance against truth, than be restored to peace by a confession of their faults

#### CHAPTER 13

18. But who can fail to understand what they may be saying in their hearts? “What then are we to do,” say they, “with those whom we have already rebaptized?” Return with them to the Church. Bring those whom you have wounded to be healed by the medicine of peace: bring those whom you have slain to be brought to life again by the life of charity. Brotherly union has great power in propitiating God. “If two of you,” says our Lord, “shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them.” If for two men who agree, how much more for two communities? Let us throw ourselves together on our knees before the Lord. Do you share with us our unity; let us share with you your contrition and let charity cover the multitude of sins. Seek counsel from the blessed Cyprian himself. See how much he considered to depend upon the blessing of unity, from which he did not sever himself to avoid the communion of those who disagreed with him; how, though he considered that those who were baptized outside the communion of the Church had no true baptism, he was yet willing to believe that, by simple admission into the Church, they might, merely in virtue of the bond of unity, be admitted to a share in pardon. For thus he solved the question which he proposed to himself in writing as follows to Jubaianus: “But some will say, What then will become of those who, in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism?” The Lord is able of His mercy to grant pardon, and not to sever from the gifts of His Church those who, being out of simplicity admitted to the Church, have in the Church fallen asleep.”

#### CHAPTER 14

19. But which is the worse, not to be baptized at all, or to be twice baptized, it is difficult to decide. I see, indeed, which is more repugnant and abhorrent to men’s feelings; but when I have recourse to that divine balance, in which the weight of things is determined, not by man’s feelings, but by the authority of God, I find a statement by our Lord on either side. For He said to Peter, “He who is washed has no need of washing a second time;” and to

Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." What is the purport of the more secret determination of God, it is perhaps difficult for men like us to learn; but as far as the mere words are concerned, any one may see what a difference there is between "has no need of washing," and "cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." The Church, lastly, herself holds as her tradition, that without baptism she cannot admit a man to her altar at all; but since it is allowed that one who has been rebaptized may be admitted after penance, surely this plainly proves that his baptism is considered valid. If, therefore, Cyprian thought that those whom he considered to be unbaptized yet had some share in pardon, in virtue of the bond of unity, the Lord has power to be reconciled even to the rebaptized by means of the simple bond of unity and peace, and by this same compensating power of peace to mitigate His displeasure against those by whom they were rebaptized, and to pardon all the errors which they had committed while in error, on their offering the sacrifice of charity, which covereth the multitude of sins; so that He looks not to the number of those who have been wounded by their separation, but to the greater number who have been delivered from bondage by their return. For in the same bond of peace in which Cyprian conceived that, through the mercy of God, those whom he considered to have been admitted to the Church without baptism, were yet not severed from the gifts of the Church, we also believe that through the same mercy of God the rebaptized can earn their pardon at His hands

#### CHAPTER 15

20. Since the Catholic Church, both in the time of the blessed Cyprian and in the older time before him, contained within her bosom either some that were rebaptized or some that were unbaptized, either the one section or the other must have won their salvation only by the force of simple unity. For if those who came over from the heretics were not baptized, as Cyprian asserts, they were not rightly admitted into the Church; and yet he himself did not despair of their obtaining pardon from the mercy of God in virtue of the unity of the Church. So again, if they were already baptized, it was not right to rebaptize them. What, therefore, was there to aid the other section, save the same charity that delighted in unity, so that what was hidden from

man's weakness, in the consideration of the sacrament, might not be reckoned, by the mercy of God, as a fault in those who were lovers of peace? Why, then, while ye fear those whom ye have rebaptized, do ye grudge yourselves and them the entrance to salvation? There was at one time a doubt upon the subject of baptism; those who held different opinions yet remained in unity. In course of time, owing to the certain discovery of the truth, that doubt was taken away. The question which, unsolved, did not frighten Cyprian into separation from the Church, invites you, now that it is solved, to return once more within the fold. Come to the Catholic Church in its agreement, which Cyprian did not desert while yet disturbed with doubt; or if now you are dissatisfied with the example of Cyprian, who held communion with those who were received with the baptism of heretics, declaring openly that we should "neither judge any one, nor deprive any one of the right of communion if he differ from us," whither are ye going, ye wretched men? What are ye doing? You are bound to fly even from yourselves, because you have advanced beyond the position where he abode. But if neither his own sins nor those of others could stand in his way, on account of the abundance of his charity and his love of brotherly kindness and the bond of peace, do you return to us, where you will find much less hindrance in the way of either us or you from the fictions which your party have invented

# Book III

Augustin undertakes the refutation of the arguments which might be derived from the epistle of Cyprian to Jubaianus, to give color to the view that the baptism of Christ could not be conferred by heretics.

## CHAPTER 1

1. I think that it may now be considered clear to every one, that the authority of the blessed Cyprian for the maintenance of the bond of peace, and the avoiding of any violation of that most wholesome charity which preserves unity in the Church, may be urged on our side rather than on the side of the Donatists. For if they have chosen to act upon his example in rebaptizing Catholics, because he thought that heretics ought to be baptized on joining the Catholic Church, shall not we rather follow his example, whereby he laid down a manifest rule that one ought in no wise, by the establishment of a separate communion, to secede from the Catholic communion, that is, from the body of Christians dispersed throughout the world, even on the admission of evil and sacrilegious men, since he was unwilling even to remove from the right of communion those whom he considered to have received sacrilegious men without baptism into the Catholic communion, saying, “Judging no one, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he differ from us?”

## CHAPTER 2

2. Nevertheless, I see what may still be required of me, viz., that I should answer those plausible arguments, by which, in even earlier times, Agrippinus, or Cyprian himself, or those in Africa who agreed with them, or any others in far distant lands beyond the sea, were moved, not indeed by the authority of any plenary or even regionary Council, but by a mere epistolary correspondence, to think that they ought to adopt a custom which

had no sanction from the ancient custom of the Church, and which was expressly forbidden by the most unanimous resolution of the Catholic world in order that an error which had begun to creep into the minds of some men, through discussions of this kind, might be cured by the more powerful truth and universal healing power of unity coming on the side of safety. And so they may see with what security I approach this discourse. If I am unable to gain my point, and show how those arguments may be refuted which they bring forward from the Council and the epistles of Cyprian, to the effect that Christ's baptism may not be given by the hands of heretics, I shall still remain safely in the Church, in whose communion Cyprian himself remained with those who differed from him

3. But if they say that the Catholic Church existed then, because there were a few, or, if they prefer it, even a considerable number, who denied the validity of any baptism conferred in an heretical body, and baptized all who came from thence, what then? Did the Church not exist at all before Agrippinus, with whom that new kind of system began, at variance with all previous custom? Or how, again after the time of Agrippinus, when, unless there had been a return to the primitive custom, there would have been no need for Cyprian to set on foot another Council? Was there no Church then, because such a custom as this prevailed everywhere, that the baptism of Christ should be considered nothing but the baptism of Christ, even though it were proved to have been conferred in a body of heretics or schismatics? But if the Church existed even then, and had not perished through a breach of its continuity, but was, on the contrary, holding its ground, and receiving increase in every nation, surely it is the safest plan to abide by this same custom, which then embraced good and bad alike in unity. But if there was then no Church in existence, because sacrilegious heretics were received without baptism, and this prevailed by universal custom, whence has Donatus made his appearance? From what land did he spring? or from what sea did he emerge? or from what sky did he fall? And so we, as I had begun to say, are safe in the communion of that Church, throughout the whole extent of which the custom now prevails, which prevailed in like manner through its whole extent before the time of Agrippinus, and in the interval between Agrippinus and Cyprian, and whose unity neither Agrippinus nor Cyprian ever deserted, nor those who agreed with them, although they

entertained different views from the rest of their brethren—all of them remaining in the same communion of unity with the very men from whom they differed in opinion. But let the Donatists themselves consider what their true position is, if they neither can say whence they derived their origin, if the Church had already been destroyed by the plague-spot of communion with heretics and schismatics received into her bosom without baptism; nor again agree with Cyprian himself, for he declared that he remained in communion with those who received heretics and schismatics, and so also with those who were received as well: while they have separated themselves from the communion of the whole world, on account of the charge of having delivered up the sacred books, which they brought against the men whom they maligned in Africa, but failed to convict when brought to trial beyond the sea; although, even had the crimes which they alleged been true, they were much less heinous than the sins of heresy and schism; and yet these could not defile Cyprian in the persons of those who came from them without baptism, as he conceived, and were admitted without baptism into the Catholic communion. Nor, in the very point in which they say that they imitate Cyprian, can they find any answer to make about acknowledging the baptism of the followers of Maximianus, together with those whom, though they belonged to the party that they had first condemned in their own plenary Council, and then gone on to prosecute even at the tribunal of the secular power, they yet received back into their communion, in the episcopate of the very same bishop under whom they had been condemned. Wherefore, if the communion of wicked men destroyed the Church in the time of Cyprian, they have no source from which they can derive their own communion; and if the Church was not destroyed, they have no excuse for their separation from it. Moreover, they are neither following the example of Cyprian, since they have burst the bond of unity, nor abiding by their own Council, since they have recognized the baptism of the followers of Maximianus.

### CHAPTER 3

4. Let us therefore, seeing that we adhere to the example of Cyprian, go on now to consider Cyprian's Council. What says Cyprian? "Ye have heard," he says, "most beloved colleagues, what Jubaianus our fellow-bishop has

written to me, consulting my moderate ability concerning the unlawful and profane baptism of heretics, and what answer I gave him,—giving a judgment which we have once and again and often given, that heretics coming to the Church ought to be baptized and sanctified with the baptism of the Church. Another letter of Jubaianus has likewise been read to you, in which, agreeably to his sincere and religious devotion, in answer to our epistle, he not only expressed his assent, but returned thanks also, acknowledging that he had received instruction.” In these words of the blessed Cyprian, we find that he had been consulted by Jubaianus, and what answer he had given to his questions, and how Jubaianus acknowledged with gratitude that he had received instruction. Ought we then to be thought unreasonably persistent if we desire to consider this same epistle by which Jubaianus was convinced? For till such time as we are also convinced (if there are any arguments of truth whereby this can be done), Cyprian himself has established our security by the right of Catholic communion

5. For he goes on to say: “It remains that we severally declare our opinion on this same subject, judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us.” He allows me, therefore, without losing the right of communion, not only to continue inquiring into the truth, but even to hold opinions differing from his own. “For no one of us,” he says, “setteth himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying.” What could be more kind? what more humble? Surely there is here no authority restraining us from inquiry into what is truth. “Inasmuch as every bishop,” he says, “in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of forming his own judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another,”—that is, I suppose, in those questions which have not yet been brought to perfect clearness of solution; for he knew what a deep question about the sacrament was then occupying the whole Church with every kind of disputation, and gave free liberty of inquiry to every man, that the truth might be made known by investigation. For he was surely not uttering what was false, and trying to catch his simpler colleagues in their speech, so that, when they should have betrayed that they held opinions at variance with his, he might then propose, in violation of his promise, that they should be excommunicated. Far be it from a soul so holy to entertain such accursed



treachery; indeed, they who hold such a view about such a man, thinking that it conduces to his praise, do but show that it would be in accordance with their own nature. I for my part will in no wise believe that Cyprian, a Catholic bishop, a Catholic martyr, whose greatness only made him proportionately humble in all things, so as to find favor before the Lord, should ever, especially in the sacred Council of his colleagues, have uttered with his mouth what was not echoed in his heart, especially as he further adds, “But we must all await the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone has the power both of setting us in the government of His Church, and of judging of our acts therein.” When, then, he called to their remembrance so solemn a judgment, hoping to hear the truth from his colleagues, would he first set them the example of lying? May God avert such madness from every Christian man, and how much more from Cyprian! We have therefore the free liberty of inquiry granted to us by the most moderate and most truthful speech of Cyprian.

#### CHAPTER 4

6. Next his colleagues proceed to deliver their several opinions. But first they listened to the letter written to Jubaianus; for it was read, as was mentioned in the preamble. Let it therefore be read among ourselves also, that we too, with the help of God, may discover from it what we ought to think. “What!” I think I hear some one saying, “do you proceed to tell us what Cyprian wrote to Jubaianus?” I have read the letter, I confess, and should certainly have been a convert to his views, had I not been induced to consider the matter more carefully by the vast weight of authority, originating in those whom the Church, distributed throughout the world amid so many nations, of Latins, Greeks, barbarians, not to mention the Jewish race itself, has been able to produce,—that same Church which gave birth to Cyprian himself,—men whom I could in no wise bring myself to think had been unwilling without reason to hold this view,—not because it was impossible that in so difficult a question the opinion of one or of a few might not have been more near the truth than that of more, but because one must not lightly, without full consideration and investigation of the matter to the best of his abilities, decide in favor of a single individual, or even of a few, against the decision of so very many men of the same religion and

communion, all endowed with great talent and abundant learning. And so how much was suggested to me on more diligent inquiry, even by the letter of Cyprian himself, in favor of the view which is now held by the Catholic Church, that the baptism of Christ is to be recognized and approved, not by the standard of their merits by whom it is administered, but by His alone of whom it is said, “The same is He which baptizeth,” will be shown naturally in the course of our argument. Let us therefore suppose that the letter which was written by Cyprian to Jubaianus has been read among us, as it was read in the Council. And I would have every one read it who means to read what I am going to say, lest he might possibly think that I have suppressed some things of consequence. For it would take too much time, and be irrelevant to the elucidation of the matter in hand, were we at this moment to quote all the words of this epistle

#### CHAPTER 5

7. But if any one should ask what I hold in the meantime, while discussing this question, I answer that, in the first place, the letter of Cyprian suggested to me what I should hold till I should see clearly the nature of the question which next begins to be discussed. For Cyprian himself says: “But some will say, What then will become of those who in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism?”“ Whether they were really without baptism, or whether they were admitted because those who admitted them conceived that they had partaken of baptism, is a matter for our future consideration. At any rate, Cyprian himself shows plainly enough what was the ordinary custom of the Church, when he says that in past time those who came to the Church from heresy were admitted without baptism

8. For in the Council itself Castus of Sicca says: “He who, despising truth, presumes to follow custom, is either envious or evil-disposed towards the brethren to whom the truth is revealed, or is ungrateful towards God, by whose inspiration His Church is instructed.” Whether the truth had been revealed, we shall investigate hereafter; at any rate, he acknowledges that the custom of the Church was different.

#### CHAPTER 6

9. Libosus also of Vaga says: “The Lord says in the gospel, I am the Truth.’ He does not say, I am custom.’ Therefore, when the truth is made manifest, custom must give way to truth.” Clearly, no one could doubt that custom must give way to truth where it is made manifest. But we shall see presently about the manifestation of the truth. Meanwhile he also makes it clear that custom was on the other side

#### CHAPTER 7

10. Zosimus also of Tharassa said: “When a revelation of the truth has been made, error must give way to truth; for even Peter, who at the first circumcised, afterwards gave way to Paul when he declared the truth.” He indeed chose to say error, not custom; but in saying “for even Peter, who at the first circumcised, afterwards gave way to Paul when he declared the truth,” he shows plainly enough that there was a custom also on the subject of baptism at variance with his views. At the same time, also, he warns us that it was not impossible that Cyprian might have held an opinion about baptism at variance with that required by the truth, as held by the Church both before and after him, if even Peter could hold a view at variance with the truth as taught us by the Apostle Paul

#### CHAPTER 8

11. Likewise Felix of Buslacene said: “In admitting heretics without the baptism of the Church, let no one prefer custom to reason and truth; because reason and truth always prevail to the exclusion of custom.” Nothing could be better, if it be reason, and if it be truth; but this we shall see presently. Meanwhile, it is clear from the words of this man also that the custom was the other way

#### CHAPTER 9

12. Likewise Honoratus of Tucca said: “Since Christ is the Truth, we ought to follow truth rather than custom.” By all these declarations it is proved that we are not excluded from the communion of the Church, till it shall have been clearly shown what is the nature of the truth, which they say must be preferred to our custom. But if the truth has made it clear that the

very regulation ought to be maintained which the said custom had prescribed, then it is evident both that this custom was not established or confirmed in vain, and also that, in consequence of the discussions in question, the most wholesome observance of so great a sacrament, which could never, indeed, have been changed in the Catholic Church, was even more watchfully guarded with the most scrupulous caution, when it had received the further corroboration of Councils

#### CHAPTER 10

13. Therefore Cyprian writes to Jubaianus as follows, “concerning the baptism of heretics, who, being placed without, and set down out of the Church,” seem to him to “claim to themselves a matter over which they have neither right nor power. Which we,” he says, “cannot account valid or lawful, since it is clear that among them it is unlawful.” Neither, indeed, do we deny that a man who is baptized among heretics, or in any schism outside the Church, derives no profit from it so far as he is partner in the perverseness of the heretics and schismatics; nor do we hold that those who baptize, although they confer the real true sacrament of baptism, are yet acting rightly, in gathering adherents outside the Church, and entertaining opinions contrary to the Church. But it is one thing to be without a sacrament, another thing to be in possession of it wrongly, and to usurp it unlawfully. Therefore they do not cease to be sacraments of Christ and the Church, merely because they are unlawfully used, not only by heretics, but by all kinds of wicked and impious persons. These, indeed, ought to be corrected and punished, but the sacraments should be acknowledged and revered

14. Cyprian, indeed, says that on this subject not one, but two or more Councils were held; always, however, in Africa. For indeed in one he mentions that seventy-one bishops had been assembled,—to all whose authority we do not hesitate, with all due deference to Cyprian, to prefer the authority, supported by many more bishops, of the whole Church spread throughout the whole world, of which Cyprian himself rejoiced that he was an inseparable member.

15. Nor is the water “profane and adulterous” over which the name of God is invoked, even though it be invoked by profane and adulterous persons; because neither the creature itself of water, nor the name invoked, is adulterous. But the baptism of Christ, consecrated by the words of the gospel, is necessarily holy, however polluted and unclean its ministers may be; because its inherent sanctity cannot be polluted, and the divine excellence abides in its sacrament, whether to the salvation of those who use it aright, or to the destruction of those who use it wrong. Would you indeed maintain that, while the light of the sun or of a candle, diffused through unclean places, contracts no foulness in itself therefrom, yet the baptism of Christ can be defiled by the sins of any man, whatsoever he may be? For if we turn our thoughts to the visible materials themselves, which are to us the medium of the sacraments, every one must know that they admit of corruption. But if we think on that which they convey to us, who can fail to see that it is incorruptible, however much the men through whose ministry it is conveyed are either being rewarded or punished for the character of their lives?

#### CHAPTER 11

16. But Cyprian was right in not being moved by what Jubaianus wrote, that “the followers of Novatian rebaptize those who come to them from the Catholic Church.” For, in the first place, it does not follow that whatever heretics have done in a perverse spirit of mimicry, Catholics are therefore to abstain from doing, because the heretics do the same. And again, the reasons are different for which heretics and the Catholic Church ought respectively to abstain from rebaptizing. For it would not be right for heretics to do so, even if it were fitting in the Catholic Church; because their argument is, that among the Catholics is wanting that which they themselves received whilst still within the pale, and took away with them when they departed. Whereas the reason why the Catholic Church should not administer again the baptism which was given among heretics, is that it may not seem to decide that a power which is Christ’s alone belongs to its members, or to pronounce that to be wanting in the heretics which they have received within her pale, and certainly could not lose by straying outside. For thus much Cyprian himself, with all the rest, established, that if

any should return from heresy to the Church, they should be received back, not by baptism, but by the discipline of penitence; whence it is clear that they cannot be held to lose by their secession what is not restored to them when they return. Nor ought it for a moment to be said that, as their heresy is their own, as their error is their own, as the sacrilege of disunion is their own, so also the baptism is their own, which is really Christ's. Accordingly, while the evils which are their own are corrected when they return, so in that which is not theirs His presence should be recognised, from whom it is

## CHAPTER 12

17. But the blessed Cyprian shows that it was no new or sudden thing that he decided, because the practice had already begun under Agrippinus. "Many years," he says, "and much time has passed away since, under Agrippinus of honored memory, a large assembly of bishops determined this point." Accordingly, under Agrippinus, at any rate, the thing was new. But I cannot understand what Cyprian means by saying, "And thenceforward to the present day, so many thousand heretics in our provinces, having been converted to our Church, showed no hesitation or dislike, but rather with full consent of reason and will, have embraced the opportunity of the grace of the laver of life and the baptism unto salvation," unless indeed he says, "thenceforward to the present day," because from the time when they were baptized in the Church, in accordance with the Council of Agrippinus, no question of excommunication had arisen in the case of any of the rebaptized. Yet if the custom of baptizing those who came over from heretics remained in force from the time of Agrippinus to that of Cyprian, why should new Councils have been held by Cyprian on this point? Why does he say to this same Jubaianus that he is not doing anything new or sudden, but only what had been established by Agrippinus? For why should Jubaianus be disturbed by the question of novelty, so as to require to be satisfied by the authority of Agrippinus, if this was the continuous practice of the Church from Agrippinus till Cyprian? Why, lastly, did so many of his colleagues urge that reason and truth must be preferred to custom, instead of saying that those who wished to act otherwise were acting contrary to truth and custom alike?

## CHAPTER 13

18. But as regards the remission of sins, whether it is granted through baptism at the hands of the heretics, I have already expressed my opinion on this point in a former book; but I will shortly recapitulate it here. If remission of sins is there conferred by the sacredness of baptism, the sins return again through obstinate perseverance in heresy or schism; and therefore such men must needs return to the peace of the Catholic Church, that they may cease to be heretics and schismatics, and deserve that those sins which had returned on them should be cleansed away by love working in the bond of unity. But if, although among heretics and schismatics it be still the same baptism of Christ, it yet cannot work remission of sins owing to this same foulness of discord and wickedness of dissent, then the same baptism begins to be of avail for the remission of sins when they come to the peace of the Church,—[not] that what has been already truly remitted should not be retained; nor that heretical baptism should be repudiated as belonging to a different religion, or as being different from our own, so that a second baptism should be administered; but that the very same baptism, which was working death by reason of discord outside the Church, may work salvation by reason of the peace within. It was, in fact, the same savor of which the apostle says, “We are a sweet savor of Christ in every place;” and yet, says he, “both in them that are saved and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of life unto life; and to the other the savor of death unto death.” And although he used these words with reference to another subject, I have applied them to this, that men may understand that what is good may not only work life to those who use it aright, but also death to those who use it wrong

## CHAPTER 14

19. Nor is it material, when we are considering the question of the genuineness and holiness of the sacrament, “what the recipient of the sacrament believes, and with what faith he is imbued.” It is of the very highest consequence as regards the entrance into salvation, but is wholly immaterial as regards the question of the sacrament. For it is quite possible that a man may be possessed of the genuine sacrament and a corrupted faith, as it is possible that he may hold the words of the creed in their

integrity, and yet entertain an erroneous belief about the Trinity, or the resurrection, or any other point. For it is no slight matter, even within the Catholic Church itself, to hold a faith entirely consistent with the truth about even God Himself, to say nothing of any of His creatures. Is it then to be maintained, that if any one who has been baptized within the Catholic Church itself should afterwards, in the course of reading, or by listening to instruction, or by quiet argument, find out, through God's own revelation, that he had before believed otherwise than he ought, it is requisite that he should therefore be baptized afresh? But what carnal and natural man is there who does not stray through the vain conceits of his own heart, and picture God's nature to himself to be such as he has imagined out of his carnal sense, and differ from the true conception of God as far as vanity from truth? Most truly, indeed, speaks the apostle, filled with the light of truth: "The natural man," says he, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." And yet herein he was speaking of men whom he himself shows to have been baptized. For he says to them, "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" These men had therefore the sacrament of baptism; and yet, inasmuch as their wisdom was of the flesh, what could they believe about God otherwise than according to the perception of their flesh, according to which "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God?" To such he says: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal." For such are carried about with every wind of doctrine, of which kind he says, "That we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." It is then true that, if these men shall have advanced even to the spiritual age of the inner man, and in the integrity of understanding shall have learned how far different from the requirements of the truth has been the belief which they have been led by the fallacious character of their conceits to entertain of God, they are therefore to be baptized again? For, on this principle, it would be possible for a Catholic catechumen to light upon the writings of some heretic, and, not having the knowledge requisite for discerning truth from error, he might entertain some belief contrary to the Catholic faith, yet not condemned by the words of the creed, just as, under color of the same words, innumerable heretical errors have sprung up.



Supposing, then, that the catechumen was under the impression that he was studying the work of some great and learned Catholic, and was baptized with that belief in the Catholic Church, and by subsequent research should discover what he ought to believe, so that, embracing the Catholic faith, he should reject his former error, ought he, on confessing this, to be baptized again? Or supposing that, before learning and confessing this for himself, he should be found to entertain such an opinion, and should be taught what he ought to reject and what he should believe, and it were to become clear that he had held this false belief when he was baptized, ought he therefore to be baptized again? Why should we maintain the contrary? Because the sanctity of the sacrament, consecrated in the words of the gospel, remains upon him in its integrity, just as he received it from the hands of the minister, although he, being firmly rooted in the vanity of his carnal mind entertained a belief other than was right at the time when he was baptized. Wherefore it is manifest that it is possible that, with defective faith, the sacrament of baptism may yet remain without defect in any man; and therefore all that is said about the diversity of the several heretics is beside the question. For in each person that is to be corrected which is found to be amiss by the man who undertakes his correction. That is to be made whole which is unsound; that is to be given which is wanting, and, above all, the peace of Christian charity, without which the rest is profitless. Yet, as the rest is there, we must not administer it as though it were wanting, only take care that its possession be to the profit, not the hurt of him who has it, through the very bond of peace and excellence of charity

#### CHAPTER 15

20. Accordingly, if Marcion consecrated the sacrament of baptism with the words of the gospel, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," the sacrament was complete, although his faith expressed under the same words, seeing that he held opinions not taught by the Catholic truth, was not complete, but stained with the falsity of fables. For under these same words, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," not Marcion only, or Valentinus, or Arius, or Eunomius, but the carnal babes of the Church themselves (to whom the apostle said, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal"), if they

could be individually asked for an accurate exposition of their opinions, would probably show a diversity of opinions as numerous as the persons who held them, “for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” Can it, however, be said on this account that they do not receive the complete sacrament? or that, if they shall advance, and correct the vanity of their carnal opinions, they must seek again what they had received? Each man receives after the fashion of his own faith; yet how much does he obtain under the guidance of that mercy of God, in the confident assurance of which the same apostle says, “If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you”? Yet the snares of heretics and schismatics prove for this reason only too pernicious to the carnally-minded, because their very progress is intercepted when their vain opinions are confirmed in opposition to the Catholic truth, and the perversity of their dissension is strengthened against the Catholic peace. Yet if the sacraments are the same, they are everywhere complete, even when they are wrongly understood, and perverted to be instruments of discord, just as the very writings of the gospel, if they are only the same, are everywhere complete, even though quoted with a boundless variety of false opinions. For as to what Jeremiah says:—”Why do those who grieve me prevail against me? My wound is stubborn, whence shall I be healed? In its origin it became unto me as lying water, having no certainty,”—if the term “water” were never used figuratively and in the allegorical language of prophecy except to signify baptism, we should have trouble in discovering what these words of Jeremiah meant; but as it is, when “waters” are expressly used in the Apocalypse to signify “peoples,” I do not see why, by “lying water having no certainty,” I should not understand, a “lying people, whom I cannot trust.”

## CHAPTER 16

21. But when it is said that “the Holy Spirit is given by the imposition of hands in the Catholic Church only, I suppose that our ancestors meant that we should understand thereby what the apostle says, “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” For this is that very love which is wanting in all who are cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church; and for lack of this, “though they speak

with the tongues of men and of angels, though they understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though they have the gift of prophecy, and all faith, so that they could remove mountains, and though they bestow all their goods to feed the poor, and though they give their bodies to be burned, it profiteth them nothing.” But those are wanting in God’s love who do not care for the unity of the Church; and consequently we are right in understanding that the Holy Spirit may be said not to be received except in the Catholic Church. For the Holy Spirit is not only given by the laying on of hands amid the testimony of temporal sensible miracles, as He was given in former days to be the credentials of a rudimentary faith, and for the extension of the first beginnings of the Church. For who expects in these days that those on whom hands are laid that they may receive the Holy Spirit should forthwith begin to speak with tongues? but it is understood that invisibly and imperceptibly, on account of the bond of peace, divine love is breathed into their hearts, so that they may be able to say, “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” But there are many operations of the Holy Spirit, which the same apostle commemorates in a certain passage at such length as he thinks sufficient, and then concludes: “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.” Since, then, the sacrament is one thing, which even Simon Magus could have; and the operation of the Spirit is another thing, which is even often found in wicked men, as Saul had the gift of prophecy; and that operation of the same Spirit is a third thing, which only the good can have, as “the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:” whatever, therefore, may be received by heretics and schismatics, the charity which covereth the multitude of sins is the especial gift of Catholic unity and peace; nor is it found in all that are within that bond, since not all that are within it are of it, as we shall see in the proper place. At any rate, outside the bond that love cannot exist, without which all the other requisites, even if they can be recognized and approved, cannot profit or release from sin. But the laying on of hands in reconciliation to the Church is not, like baptism, incapable of repetition; for what is it more than a prayer offered over a man?

22. “For as regards the fact that to preserve the figure of unity the Lord gave the power to Peter that whatsoever he should loose on earth should be loosed,” it is clear that that unity is also described as one dove without fault. Can it be said, then, that to this same dove belong all those greedy ones, whose existence in the same Catholic Church Cyprian himself so grievously bewailed? For birds of prey, I believe, cannot be called doves, but rather hawks. How then did they baptize those who used to plunder estates by treacherous deceit, and increase their profits by compound usury, if baptism is only given by that indivisible and chaste and perfect dove, that unity which can only be understood as existing among the good? Is it possible that, by the prayers of the saints who are spiritual within the Church, as though by the frequent lamentations of the dove, a great sacrament is dispensed, with a secret administration of the mercy of God, so that their sins also are loosed who are baptized, not by the dove but by the hawk, if they come to that sacrament in the peace of Catholic unity? But if this be so, why should it not also be the case that, as each man comes from heresy or schism to the Catholic peace, his sins should be loosed through their prayers? But the integrity of the sacrament is everywhere recognized, though it will not avail for the irrevocable remission of sins outside the unity of the Church. Nor will the prayers of the saints, or, in other words, the groanings of that one dove, be able to help one who is set in heresy or schism; just as they are not able to help one who is placed within the Church, if by a wicked life he himself retain the debts of his sins against himself, and that though he be baptized, not by this hawk, but by the pious ministry of the dove herself

#### CHAPTER 18

23. “As my Father hath sent me,” says our Lord, “even so send I you. And what He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” Therefore, if they represented the Church, and this was said to them as to the Church herself, it follows that the peace of the Church looses sins, and estrangement from the Church retains them, not according to the will of men, but according to the will of God and the prayers of the saints who are spiritual, who “judge

all things, but themselves are judged of no man.” For the rock retains, the rock remits; the dove retains, the dove remits; unity retains, unity remits. But the peace of this unity exists only in the good, in those who are either already spiritual, or are advancing by the obedience of concord to spiritual things; it exists not in the bad, whether they make disturbances abroad, or are endured within the Church with lamentations, baptizing and being baptized. But just as those who are tolerated with groanings within the Church, although they do not belong to the same unity of the dove, and to that “glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing,” yet if they are corrected, and confess that they approached to baptism most unworthily, are not baptized again, but begin to belong to the dove, through whose groans those sins are remitted which were retained in them who were estranged from her peace; so those also who are more openly without the Church, if they have received the same sacraments, are not freed from their sins on coming, after correction, to the unity of the Church, by a repetition of baptism, but by the same law of charity and bond of unity. For if “those only may baptize who are set over the Church, and established by the law of the gospel and ordination as appointed by the Lord,” were they in any wise of this kind who seized on estates by treacherous frauds, and increased their gains by compound interest? I trow not, since those are established by ordination as appointed of the Lord, of whom the apostle, in giving them a standard, says, “Not greedy, not given to filthy lucre.” Yet men of this kind used to baptize in the time of Cyprian himself; and he confesses with many lamentations that they were his fellow-bishops, and endures them with the great reward of tolerance. Yet did they not confer remission of sins, which is granted through the prayers of the saints, that is, the groans of the dove, whoever it be that baptizes, if those to whom it is given belong to her peace. For the Lord would not say to robbers and usurers, “Whose soever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted to him; and whose soever sins ye retain, they shall be retained.” “Outside the Church, indeed, nothing can be either bound or loosed, since there there is no one who can either bind or loose;” but he is loosed who has made peace with the dove, and he is bound who is not at peace with the dove, whether he is openly without, or appears to be within

24. But we know that Dathan, Korah, and Abiram, who tried to usurp to themselves the right of sacrificing, contrary to the unity of the people of God, and also the sons of Aaron who offered strange fire upon the altar, did not escape punishment. Nor do we say that such offenses remain unpunished, unless those guilty of them correct themselves, if the patience of God leading them to repentance give them time for correction.

#### CHAPTER 19

25. They indeed who say that baptism is not to be repeated, because only hands were laid on those whom Philip the deacon had baptized, are saying what is quite beside the point; and far be it from us, in seeking the truth, to use such arguments as this. Wherefore we are all the further from “yielding to heretics,” if we deny that what they possess of Christ’s Church is their own property, and do not refuse to acknowledge the standard of our General because of the crimes of deserters; nay, all the more because “the Lord our God is a jealous God,” let us refuse, whenever we see anything of His with an alien, to allow him to consider it his own. For of a truth the jealous God Himself rebukes the woman who commits fornication against Him, as the type of an erring people, and says that she gave to her lovers what belonged to Him, and again received from them what was not theirs but His. In the hands of the adulterous woman and the adulterous lovers, God in His wrath, as a jealous God, recognizes His gifts; and do we say that baptism, consecrated in the words of the gospel, belongs to heretics? and are we willing, from consideration of their deeds, to attribute to them even what belongs to God, as though they had the power to pollute it, or as though they could make what is God’s to be their own, because they themselves have refused to belong to God?

26. Who is that adulterous woman whom the prophet Hosea points out, who said, “I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, and everything that befits me?” Let us grant that we may understand this also of the people of the Jews that went astray; yet whom else are the false Christians (such as are all heretics and schismatics) wont to imitate, except false Israelites? For there were also true Israelites, as the Lord Himself bears witness to Nathanael, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” But who are true Christians, save those of whom the

same Lord said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me?" But what is it to keep His commandments, except to abide in love? Whence also He says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another;" and again, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." But who can doubt that this was spoken not only to those who heard His words with their fleshly ears when He was present with them, but also to those who learn His words through the gospel, when He is sitting on His throne in heaven? For He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill. But the fulfilling of the law is love. And in this Cyprian abounded greatly, insomuch that though he held a different view concerning baptism, he yet did not forsake the unity of the Church, and was in the Lord's vine a branch firmly rooted, bearing fruit, which the heavenly Husbandman purged with the knife of suffering, that it should bear more fruit. But the enemies of this brotherly love, whether they are openly without, or appear to be within, are false Christians, and antichrists. For when they have found an opportunity, they go out, as it is written: "A man wishing to separate himself from his friends, seeketh opportunities." But even if occasions are wanting, while they seem to be within, they are severed from that invisible bond of love. Whence St. John says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." He does not say that they ceased to be of us by going out, but that they went out because they were not of us. The Apostle Paul also speaks of certain men who had erred concerning the truth, and were overthrowing the faith of some; whose word was eating as a canker. Yet in saying that they should be avoided, he nevertheless intimates that they were all in one great house, but as vessels to dishonor,—I suppose because they had not as yet gone out. Or if they had already gone out, how can he say that they were in the same great house with the honorable vessels, unless it was in virtue of the sacraments themselves, which even in the severed meetings of heretics are not changed, that he speaks of all as belonging to the same great house, though in different degrees of esteem, some to honor and some to dishonor? For thus he speaks in his Epistle to Timothy: "But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow

the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth firm, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." But what is it to purge oneself from such as these, except what he said just before, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." And lest any one should think that, as being in one great house with them, he might perish with such as these, he has most carefully forewarned them, "The Lord knoweth them that are His,"—those, namely, who, by departing from iniquity, purge themselves from the vessels made to dishonor, lest they should perish with them whom they are compelled to tolerate in the great house.

27. They, therefore, who are wicked, evildoers, carnal, fleshly, devilish, think that they receive at the hands of their seducers what are the gifts of God alone, whether sacraments, or any spiritual workings about present salvation. But these men have not love towards God, but are busied about those by whose pride they are led astray, and are compared to the adulterous woman, whom the prophet introduces as saying, "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, and my oil, and everything that befits me." For thus arise heresies and schisms, when the fleshly people which is not founded on the love of God says, "I will go after my lovers," with whom, either by corruption of her faith, or by the puffing up of her pride, she shamefully commits adultery. But for the sake of those who, having undergone the difficulties, and straits, and barriers of the empty reasoning of those by whom they are led astray, afterwards feel the prickings of fear, and return to the way of peace, to seeking God in all sincerity,—for their sake He goes on to say, "Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them: and she shall seek them, but she shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now." Then, that they may not attribute to their seducers what they have that is sound, and derived from the doctrine of truth, by which they lead



them astray to the falseness of their own dogmas and dissensions; that they may not think that what is sound in them belongs to them, he immediately added, "And she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her money; but she made vessels of gold and silver for Baal." For she had said above, "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread," etc., not at all understanding that all this, which was held soundly and lawfully by her seducers, was of God, and not of men. Nor would even they themselves claim these things for themselves, and as it were assert a right in them, had not they in turn been led astray by a people which had gone astray, when faith is reposed in them, and such honors are paid to them, that they should be enabled thereby to say such things, and claim such things for themselves, that their error should be called truth, and their iniquity be thought righteousness, in virtue of the sacraments and Scriptures, which they hold, not for salvation, but only in appearance. Accordingly, the same adulterous woman is addressed by the mouth of Ezekiel: "Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them; and tookest my brodered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them. My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before thine idols for a sweet savor: and this thou hast done." For she turns all the sacraments, and the words of the sacred books, to the images of her own idols, with which her carnal mind delights to wallow. Nor yet, because those images are false, and the doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, are those sacraments and divine utterances therefore so to lose their due honor, as to be thought to belong to such as these; seeing that the Lord says," Of my gold, and my silver, and my brodered garments, and mine oil, and mine incense, and my meat," and so forth. Ought we, because those erring ones think that these things belong to their seducers, therefore not to recognize whose they really are, when He Himself says, "And she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her money"? For He did not say that she did not have these things because she was an adulteress; but she is said to have had them, and that not as belonging to herself or her lovers, but to God, whose alone they are. Although, therefore, she had her fornication, yet those things wherewith she adorned it, whether as seduced or in her turn seducing, belonged not to her,

but to God. If these things were spoken in a figure of the Jewish nation, when the scribes and Pharisees were rejecting the commandment of God in order to set up their own traditions, so that they were in a manner committing whoredom with a people which was abandoning their God; and yet for all that, whoredom at that time among the people, such as the Lord brought to light by convicting it, did not cause that the mysteries should belong to them, which were not theirs but God's, who, in speaking to the adulteress, says that all these things were His; whence the Lord Himself also sent those whom He cleansed from leprosy to the same mysteries, that they should offer sacrifice for themselves before the priests, because that sacrifice had not become efficacious for them, which He Himself afterwards wished to be commemorated in the Church for all of them, because He Himself proclaimed the tidings to them all;—if this be so, how much the more ought we, when we find the sacraments of the New Testament among certain heretics or schismatics, not to attribute them to these men, nor to condemn them, as though we could not recognize them? We ought to recognize the gifts of the true husband, though in the possession of an adulteress, and to amend, by the word of truth, that whoredom which is the true possession of the unchaste woman, instead of finding fault with the gifts, which belong entirely to the pitying Lord.

28. From these considerations, and such as these, our forefathers, not only before the time of Cyprian and Agrippinus, but even afterwards, maintained a most wholesome custom, that whenever they found anything divine and lawful remaining in its integrity even in the midst of any heresy or schism, they approved rather than repudiated it; but whatever they found that was alien, and peculiar to that false doctrine or division, this they convicted in the light of the truth, and healed. The points, however, which remain to be considered in the letter written by Jubaianus, must, I think, when looking at the size of this book, be taken in hand and treated with a fresh beginning.

# Book IV

In which he treats of what follows in the same epistle of Cyprian to Jubaianus.

## CHAPTER 1

1. The comparison of the Church with Paradise shows us that men may indeed receive her baptism outside her pale, but that no one outside can either receive or retain the salvation of eternal happiness. For, as the words of Scripture testify, the streams from the fountain of Paradise flowed copiously even beyond its bounds. Record indeed is made of their names; and through what countries they flow, and that they are situated beyond the limits of Paradise, is known to all; and yet in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, to which countries those rivers extended, there is not found that blessedness of life which is recorded in Paradise. Accordingly, though the waters of Paradise are found beyond its boundaries, yet its happiness is in Paradise alone. So, therefore, the baptism of the Church may exist outside, but the gift of the life of happiness is found alone within the Church, which has been founded on a rock, which has received the keys of binding and loosing. “She it is alone who holds as her privilege the whole power of her Bridegroom and Lord;” by virtue of which power as bride, she can bring forth sons even of handmaids. And these, if they be not high-minded, shall be called into the lot of the inheritance; but if they be high-minded, they shall remain outside

## CHAPTER 2

2. All the more, then, because “we are fighting for the honor and unity” of the Church, let us beware of giving to heretics the credit of whatever we acknowledged among them as belonging to the Church; but let us teach them by argument, that what they possess that is derived from unity is of no

efficacy to their salvation, unless they shall return to that same unity. For “the water of the Church is full of faith, and salvation, and holiness” to those who use it rightly. No one, however, can use it well outside the Church. But to those who use it perversely, whether within or without the Church, it is employed to work punishment, and does not conduce to their reward. And so baptism “cannot be corrupted and polluted,” though it be handled by the corrupt or by adulterers, just as also “the Church herself is uncorrupt, and pure, and chaste.” And so no share in it belongs to the avaricious, or thieves, or usurers,—many of whom, by the testimony of Cyprian himself in many places of his letters, exist not only without, but actually within the Church,—and yet they both are baptized and do baptize, with no change in their hearts

3. For this, too, he says, in one of his epistles to the clergy on the subject of prayer to God, in which, after the fashion of the holy Daniel, he represents the sins of his people as falling upon himself. For among many other evils of which he makes mention, he speaks of them also as “renouncing the world in words only and not in deeds;” as the apostle says of certain men, “They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him.” These, therefore, the blessed Cyprian shows to be contained within the Church herself, who are baptized without their hearts being changed for the better, seeing that they renounce the world in words and not in deeds, as the Apostle Peter says, “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience),” which certainly they had not of whom it is said that they “renounced the world in words only, and not in deeds;” and yet he does his utmost, by chiding and convincing them, to make them at length walk in the way of Christ, and be His friends rather than friends of the world.

#### CHAPTER 3

4. And if they would have obeyed him, and begun to live rightly, not as false but as true Christians, would he have ordered them to be baptized anew? Surely not; but their true conversion would have gained this for them, that the sacrament which availed for their destruction while they were yet unchanged, should begin when they changed to avail for their salvation

5. For neither are they “devoted to the Church” who seem to be within and live contrary to Christ, that is, act against His commandments; nor can they be considered in any way to belong to that Church, which He so purifies by the washing of water, “that He may present to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.” But if they are not in that Church to whose members they do not belong, they are not in the Church of which it is said, “My dove is but one; she is the only one of her mother;” for she herself is without spot or wrinkle. Or else let him who can assert that those are members of this dove who renounce the world in words but not in deeds. Meantime there is one thing which we see, from which I think it was said, “He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord,” for God judgeth every day. For, according to His foreknowledge, who knows whom He has foreordained before the foundation of the world to be made like to the image of His Son, many who are even openly outside, and are called heretics, are better than many good Catholics. For we see what they are to-day, what they shall be to-morrow we know not. And with God, with whom the future is already present, they already are what they shall hereafter be. But we, according to what each man is at present, inquire whether they are to be to-day reckoned among the members of the Church which is called the one dove, and the Bride of Christ without a spot or wrinkle, of whom Cyprian says in the letter which I have quoted above, that “they did not keep in the way of the Lord, nor observe the commandments given unto them for their salvation; that they did not fulfill the will of their Lord, being eager about their property and gains, following the dictates of pride, giving way to envy and dissension, careless about single-mindedness and faith, renouncing the world in words only and not in deeds, pleasing each himself, and displeasing all men.” But if the dove does not acknowledge them among her members, and if the Lord shall say to them, supposing that they continue in the same perversity, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity;” then they seem indeed to be in the Church, but are not; “nay, they even act against the Church. How then can they baptize with the baptism of the Church,” which is of avail neither to themselves, nor to those who receive it from them, unless they are changed in heart with a true conversion, so that the sacrament itself, which did not avail them when they received it whilst they were renouncing the world in words and not in deeds, may begin to profit them when they shall begin to renounce it in

deeds also? And so too in the case of those whose separation from the Church is open; for neither these nor those are as yet among the members of the dove, but some of them perhaps will be at some future time.

#### CHAPTER 4

6. We do not, therefore, “acknowledge the baptism of heretics,” when we refuse to baptize after them; but because we acknowledge the ordinance to be of Christ even among evil men, whether openly separated from us, or secretly severed whilst within our body, we receive it with due respect, having corrected those who were wrong in the points wherein they went astray. However as I seem to be hard pressed when it is said to me, “Does then a heretic confer remission of sins?” so I in turn press hard when I say, Does then he who violates the commands of Heaven, the avaricious man, the robber, the usurer, the envious man, does he who renounces the world in words and not in deeds, confer such remission? If you mean by the force of God’s sacrament, then both the one and the other; if by his own merit, neither of them. For that sacrament, even in the hands of wicked men, is known to be of Christ; but neither the one nor the other of these men is found in the body of the one uncorrupt, holy, chaste dove, which has neither spot nor wrinkle. And just as baptism is of no profit to the man who renounces the world in words and not in deeds, so it is of no profit to him who is baptized in heresy or schism; but each of them, when he amends his ways, begins to receive profit from that which before was not profitable, but was yet already in him

7. “He therefore that is baptized in heresy does not become the temple of God; but does it therefore follow that he is not to be considered as baptized? For neither does the avaricious man, baptized within the Church, become the temple of God unless he depart from his avarice; for they who become the temple of God certainly inherit the kingdom of God. But the apostle says, among many other things, “Neither the covetous, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” For in another place the same apostle compares covetousness to the worship of idols: “Nor covetous man,” he says, “who is an idolater;” which meaning the same Cyprian has so far extended in a letter to Antonianus, that he did not hesitate to compare the sin of covetousness with that of men who in time of persecution had

declared in writing that they would offer incense. The man, then, who is baptized in heresy in the name of the Holy Trinity, yet does not become the temple of God unless he abandons his heresy, just as the covetous man who has been baptized in the same name does not become the temple of God unless he abandons his covetousness, which is idolatry. For this, too, the same apostle says: "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" Let it not, then, be asked of us "of what God he is made the temple" when we say that he is not made the temple of God at all. Yet he is not therefore unbaptized, nor does his foul error cause that what he has received, consecrated in the words of the gospel, should not be the holy sacrament; just as the other man's covetousness (which is idolatry) and great uncleanness cannot prevent what he receives from being holy baptism, even though he be baptized with the same words of the gospel by another man covetous like himself.

#### CHAPTER 5

8. "Further," Cyprian goes on to say, "in vain do some, who are overcome by reason, oppose to us custom, as though custom were superior to truth, or that were not to be followed in spiritual things which has been revealed by the Holy Spirit, as the better way." This is clearly true, since reason and truth are to be preferred to custom. But when truth supports custom, nothing should be more strongly maintained. Then he proceeds as follows: "For one may pardon a man who merely errs, as the Apostle Paul says of himself, Who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly;" but he who, after inspiration and revelation given, perseveres advisedly and knowingly in his former error, sins without hope of pardon on the ground of ignorance. For he rests on a kind of presumption and obstinacy, when he is overcome by reason." This is most true, that his sin is much more grievous who has sinned wittingly than his who has sinned through ignorance. And so in the case of the holy Cyprian, who was not only learned, but also patient of instruction, which he so fully himself understood to be a part of the praise of the bishop whom the apostle describes, that he said, "This also should be approved in a bishop, that he not only teach with knowledge, but also learn with patience." I do not doubt that if he had had the opportunity of discussing

this question, which has been so long and so much disputed in the Church, with the pious and learned men to whom we owe it that subsequently that ancient custom was confirmed by the authority of a plenary Council, he would have shown, without hesitation, not only how learned he was in those things which he had grasped with all the security of truth, but also how ready he was to receive instruction in what he had failed to perceive. And yet, since it is so clear that it is much more grievous to sin wittingly than in ignorance, I should be glad if any one would tell me which is the worse,—the man who falls into heresy, not knowing how great a sin it is, or the man who refuses to abandon his covetousness, knowing its enormity? I might even put the question thus: If one man unwittingly fall into heresy, and another knowingly refuse to depart from idolatry, since the apostle himself says, “The covetous man, which is an idolater;” and Cyprian too understood the same passage in just the same way, when he says, in his letter to Antonianus, “Nor let the new heretics flatter themselves in this, that they say they do not communicate with idolaters, whereas there are amongst them both adulterers and covetous persons, who are held guilty of the sin of idolatry; for know this, and understand, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God;” and again, Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”“ I ask, therefore, which sins more deeply,—he who ignorantly has fallen into heresy, or he who wittingly has refused to abandon covetousness, that is idolatry? According to that rule by which the sins of those who sin wittingly are placed before those of the ignorant, the man who is covetous with knowledge takes the first place in sin. But as it is possible that the greatness of the actual sin should produce the same effect in the case of heresy that the witting commission of the sin produces in that of covetousness, let us suppose the ignorant heretic to be on a par in guilt with the consciously covetous man, although the evidence which Cyprian himself has advanced from the apostle does not seem to prove this. For what is it that we abominate in heretics except their blasphemies? But when he wished to show that ignorance of the sin may conduce to ease in obtaining pardon, he advanced a proof from the case of the apostle, when he says, “Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy,



because I did it ignorantly.” But if possible, as I said before, let the sins of the two men—the blasphemy of the unconscious, and the idolatry of the conscious sinner—be esteemed of equal weight; and let them be judged by the same sentence,—he who, in seeking for Christ, falls into a truth-like setting forth of what is false, and he who wittingly resists Christ speaking through His apostle, “seeing that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God,”—and then I would ask why baptism and the words of the gospel are held as naught in the former case, and accounted valid in the latter, when each is alike found to be estranged from the members of the dove. Is it because the former is an open combatant outside, that he should not be admitted, the latter a cunning assenter within the fold, that he may not be expelled?

## CHAPTER 6

9. But as regards his saying, “Nor let any one affirm that what they have received from the apostles, that they follow; for the apostles handed down only one Church and one baptism, and that appointed only in the same Church:” this does not so much move me to venture to condemn the baptism of Christ when found amongst heretics (just as it is necessary to recognize the gospel itself when I find it with them, though I abominate their error), as it warns me that there were some even in the times of the holy Cyprian who traced to the authority of the apostles that custom against which the African Councils were held, and in respect of which he himself said a little above, “In vain do those who are beaten by reason oppose to us the authority of custom.” Nor do I find the reason why the same Cyprian found this very custom, which after his time was confirmed by nothing less than a plenary Council of the whole world, already so strong before his time, that when with all his learning he sought an authority worth following for changing it, he found nothing but a Council of Agrippinus held in Africa a very few years before his own time. And seeing that this was not enough for him, as against the custom of the whole world, he laid hold on these reasons which we just now, considering them with great care, and being confirmed by the antiquity of the custom itself, and by the subsequent authority of a plenary Council, found to be truth-like rather than true;

which, however, seemed to him true, as he toiled in a question of the greatest obscurity, and was in doubt about the remission of sins,—whether it could fail to be given in the baptism of Christ, and whether it could be given among heretics. In which matter, if an imperfect revelation of the truth was given to Cyprian, that the greatness of his love in not deserting the unity of the Church might be made manifest, there is yet not any reason why any one should venture to claim superiority over the strong defenses and excellence of his virtues, and the abundance of graces which were found in him, merely because, with the instruction derived from the strength of a general Council, he sees something which Cyprian did not see, because the Church had not yet held a plenary Council on the matter. Just as no one is so insane as to set himself up as surpassing the merits of the Apostle Peter, because, taught by the epistles of the Apostle Paul, and confirmed by the custom of the Church herself, he does not compel the Gentiles to judaize, as Peter once had done

10. We do not then “find that any one, after being baptized among heretics, was afterwards admitted by the apostles with the same baptism, and communicated;” but neither do we find this, that any one coming from the society of heretics, who had been baptized among them, was baptized anew by the apostles. But this custom, which even then those who looked back to past ages could not find to have been invented by men of a later time, is rightly believed to have been handed down from the apostles. And there are many other things of the same kind, which it would be tedious to recount. Wherefore, if they had something to say for themselves to whom Cyprian, wishing to persuade them of the truth of his own view, says, “Let no one say, What we have received from the apostles, that we follow,” with how much more force we now say, What the custom of the Church has always held, what this argument has failed to prove false, and what a plenary Council has confirmed, this we follow! To this we may add that it may also be said, after a careful inquiry into the reasoning on both sides of the discussion, and into the evidence of Scripture, What truth has declared, that we follow.

11. For in fact, as to what some opposed to the reasoning of Cyprian, that the apostle says, "Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, let Christ be preached;" Cyprian rightly exposed their error, showing that it has nothing to do with the case of heretics, since the apostle was speaking of those who were acting within the Church, with malicious envy seeking their own profit. They announced Christ, indeed, according to the truth whereby we believe in Christ, but not in the spirit in which He was announced by the good evangelists to the sons of the dove. "For Paul," he says, "in his epistle was not speaking of heretics, or of their baptism, so that it could be shown that he had laid down anything concerning this matter. He was speaking of brethren, whether as walking disorderly and contrary to the discipline of the Church, or as keeping the discipline of the Church in the fear of God. And he declared that some of them spoke the word of God steadfastly and fearlessly, but that some were acting in envy and strife; that some had kept themselves encompassed with kindly Christian love, but that others entertained malice and strife: but yet that he patiently endured all things, with the view that, whether in truth or in pretence, the name of Christ, which Paul preached, might come to the knowledge of the greatest number, and that the sowing of the word, which was as yet a new and unaccustomed work, might spread more widely by the preaching of those that spoke. Furthermore, it is one thing for those who are within the Church to speak in the name of Christ, another thing for those who are without, acting against the Church, to baptize in the name of Christ." These words of Cyprian seem to warn us that we must distinguish between those who are bad outside, and those who are bad within the Church. And those whom he says that the apostle represents as preaching the gospel impurely and of envy, he says truly were within. This much, however, I think I may say without rashness, if no one outside can have anything which is of Christ, neither can any one within have anything which is of the devil. For if that closed garden can contain the thorns of the devil, why cannot the fountain of Christ equally flow beyond the garden's bounds? But if it cannot contain them, whence, even in the time of the Apostle Paul himself, did there arise amongst those who were within so great an evil of envy and malicious strife? For these are the words of Cyprian. Can it be that envy and malicious strife are a small evil? How then were those in unity who were not at peace? For it is not my voice, nor that of any man, but of the Lord Himself; nor did

the sound go forth from men, but from angels, at the birth of Christ, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.” And this certainly would not have been proclaimed by the voice of angels when Christ was born upon the earth, unless God wished this to be understood, that those are in the unity of the body of Christ who are united in the peace of Christ, and those are in the peace of Christ who are of good will. Furthermore, as good will is shown in kindness, so is bad will shown in malice

## CHAPTER 8

12. In short, we may see how great an evil in itself is envy, which cannot be other than malicious. Let us not look for other testimony. Cyprian himself is sufficient for us, through whose mouth the Lord poured forth so many thunders in most perfect truth, and uttered so many useful precepts about envy and malignity. Let us therefore read the letter of Cyprian about envy and malignity, and see how great an evil it is to envy those better than ourselves,—an evil whose origin he shows in memorable words to have sprung from the devil himself. “To feel jealousy,” he says, “of what you regard as good, and to envy those who are better than yourselves, to some, dearest brethren, seems a light and minute offense.” And again a little later, when he was inquiring into the source and origin of the evil, he says, “From this the devil, in the very beginning of the world, perished first himself, and led others to destruction.” And further on in the same chapter: “What an evil, dearest brethren, is that by which an angel fell! by which that exalted and illustrious loftiness was able to be deceived and overthrown! by which he was deceived who was the deceiver! From that time envy stalks upon the earth, when man, about to perish through malignity, submits himself to the teacher of perdition,—when he who envies imitates the devil, as it is written, Through envy of the devil came death into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it.”“ How true, how forcible are these words of Cyprian, in an epistle known throughout the world, we cannot fail to recognize. It was truly fitting for Cyprian to argue and warn most forcibly about envy and malignity, from which most deadly evil he proved his own heart to be so far removed by the abundance of his Christian love; by carefully guarding which he remained in the unity of communion with his

colleagues, who without ill-feeling entertained different views about baptism, whilst he himself differed in opinion from them, not through any contention of ill will, but through human infirmity, erring in a point which God, in His own good time, would reveal to him by reason of his perseverance in love. For he says openly, “Judging no one, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he differ from us. For no one of us setteth himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying.” And in the end of the epistle before us he says, “These things I have written to you briefly, dearest brother, according to my poor ability, prescribing to or prejudging no one, so as to prevent each bishop from doing what he thinks right in the free exercise of his own judgment. We, so far as in us lies, do not strive on behalf of heretics with our colleges and fellow-bishops, with whom we hold the harmony that God enjoins, and the peace of our Lord, especially as the apostle says, If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.’ Christian love in our souls, the honor of our fraternity, the bond of faith, the harmony of the priesthood, all these are maintained by us with patience and gentleness. For this cause we have also, so far as our poor ability admitted, by the permission and inspiration of the Lord, written now a treatise on the benefit of patience, which we have sent to you in consideration of our mutual affection.”

## CHAPTER 9

13. By this patience of Christian love he not only endured the difference of opinion manifested in all kindness by his good colleagues on an obscure point, as he also himself received toleration, till, in process of time, when it so pleased God, what had always been a most wholesome custom was further confirmed by a declaration of the truth in a plenary Council, but he even put up with those who were manifestly bad, as was very well known to himself, who did not entertain a different view in consequence of the obscurity of the question, but acted contrary to their preaching in the evil practices of an abandoned life, as the apostle says of them, “Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?” For Cyprian says in his letter of such bishops of his own time, his own colleagues, and remaining in communion with him, “While they had brethren starving in the Church,

they tried to amass large sums of money, they took possession of estates by fraudulent proceedings, they multiplied their gains by accumulated usuries.” For here there is no obscure question. Scripture declares openly, “Neither covetous nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God;” and “He that putteth out his money to usury,” and “No whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” He therefore certainly would not, without knowledge, have brought accusations of such covetousness, that men not only greedily treasured up their own goods, but also fraudulently appropriated the goods of others, or of idolatry existing in such enormity as he understands and proves it to exist; nor assuredly would he bear false witness against his fellow-bishops. And yet with the bowels of fatherly and motherly love he endured them, lest that, by rooting out the tares before their time, the wheat should also have been rooted up, imitating assuredly the Apostle Paul, who, with the same love towards the Church, endured those who were ill-disposed and envious towards him

14. But yet because “by the envy of the devil death entered into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it,” not because they are created by God, but because they go astray of themselves, as Cyprian also says himself, seeing that the devil, before he was a devil, was an angel, and good, how can it be that they who are of the devil’s side are in the unity of Christ? Beyond all doubt, as the Lord Himself says, “an enemy hath done this,” who “sowed tares among the wheat.” As therefore what is of the devil within the fold must be convicted, so what is of Christ without must be recognized. Has the devil what is his within the unity of the Church, and shall Christ not have what is His without? This, perhaps, might be said of individual men, that as the devil has none that are his among the holy angels, so God has none that are His outside the communion of the Church. But though it may be allowed to the devil to mingle tares, that is, wicked men, with this Church which still wears the mortal nature of flesh, so long as it is wandering far from God, he being allowed this just because of the pilgrimage of the Church herself, that men may desire more ardently the rest of that country which the angels enjoy, yet this cannot be said of the sacraments. For, as the tares within the Church can have and handle them, though not for salvation, but for the destruction to which they are destined

in the fire, so also can the tares without, which received them from seceders from within; for they did not lose them by seceding. This, indeed, is made plain from the fact that baptism is not conferred again on their return, when any of the very men who seceded happen to come back again. And let not any one say, Why, what fruit hath the tares? For if this be so, their condition is the same, so far as this goes, both inside and without. For it surely cannot be that grains of corn are found in the tares inside, and not in those without. But when the question is of the sacrament, we do not consider whether the tares bear any fruit, but whether they have any share of heaven; for the tares, both within and without, share the rain with the wheat itself, which rain is in itself heavenly and sweet, even though under its influence the tares grow up in barrenness. And so the sacrament, according to the gospel of Christ, is divine and pleasant; nor is it to be esteemed as naught because of the barrenness of those on whom its dew falls even without.

#### CHAPTER 10

15. But some one may say that the tares within may more easily be converted into wheat. I grant that it is so; but what has this to do with the question of repeating baptism? You surely do not maintain that if a man converted from heresy, through the occasion and opportunity given by his conversion, should bear fruit before another who, being within the Church, is more slow to be washed from his iniquity, and so corrected and changed, the former therefore needs not to be baptized again, but the churchman to be baptized again, who was outstripped by him who came from the heretics, because of the greater slowness of his amendment. It has nothing, therefore, to do with the question now at issue who is later or slower in being converted from his especial waywardness to the straight path of faith, or hope, or charity. For although the bad within the fold are more easily made good yet it will sometimes happen that certain of the number of those outside will outstrip in their conversion certain of those within; and while these remain in barrenness, the former, being restored to unity and communion, will bear fruit with patience, thirty-fold, or sixty-fold, or a hundred-fold. Or if those only are to be called tares who remain in perverse error to the end, there are many ears of corn outside, and many tares within

16. But it will be urged that the bad outside are worse than those within. It is indeed a weighty question, whether Nicolaus, being already severed from the Church, or Simon, who was still within it, was the worse,—the one being a heretic, the other a sorcerer. But if the mere fact of division, as being the clearest token of violated charity, is held to be the worse evil, I grant that it is so. Yet many, though they have lost all feelings of charity, yet do not secede from considerations of worldly profit; and as they seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's, what they are unwilling to secede from is not the unity of Christ, but their own temporal advantage. Whence it is said in praise of charity, that she "seeketh not her own."

17. Now, therefore, the question is, how could men of the party of the devil belong to the Church, which has no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, of which also it is said, "My dove is one?" But if they cannot, it is clear that she groans among those who are not of her, some treacherously laying wait within, some barking at her gate without. Such men, however, even within, both receive baptism, and possess it, and transmit it holy in itself; nor is it in any way defiled by their wickedness, in which they persevere even to the end. Wherefore the same blessed Cyprian teaches us that baptism is to be considered as consecrated in itself by the words of the gospel, as the Church has received, without joining to it or mingling with it any consideration of waywardness and wickedness on the part of either minister or recipients; since he himself points out to us both truths,—both that there have been some within the Church who did not cherish kindly Christian love, but practised envy and unkind dissension, of whom the Apostle Paul spoke; and also that the envious belong to the devil's party, as he testifies in the most open way in the epistle which he wrote about envy and malignity. Wherefore, since it is clearly possible that in those who belong to the devil's party, Christ's sacrament may yet be holy,—not, indeed, to their salvation, but to their condemnation, and that not only if they are led astray after they have been baptized, but even if they were such in heart when they received the sacrament, renouncing the world (as the same Cyprian shows) in words only and not in deeds; and since even if afterwards they be brought into the right way, the sacrament is not to be again administered which they received when they were astray; so far as I can see, the case is already clear and evident, that in the question of baptism we have to



consider, not who gives, but what he gives; not who receives, but what he receives; not who has, but what he has. For if men of the party of the devil, and therefore in no way belonging to the one dove, can yet receive, and have, and give baptism in all its holiness, in no way defiled by their waywardness, as we are taught by the letters of Cyprian himself, how are we ascribing to heretics what does not belong to them? how are we saying that what is really Christ's is theirs, and not rather recognizing in them the signs of our Sovereign, and correcting the deeds of deserters from Him? Wherefore it is one thing, as the holy Cyprian says, "for those within in the Church, to speak in the name of Christ, another thing for those without, who are acting against the Church, to baptize in His name." But both many who are within act against the Church by evil living, and by enticing weak souls to copy their lives; and some who are without speak in Christ's name, and are not forbidden to work the works of Christ, but only to be without, since for the healing of their souls we grasp at them, or reason with them, or exhort them. For he, too, was without who did not follow Christ with His disciples, and yet in Christ's name was casting out devils, which the Lord enjoined that he should not be prevented from doing; although, certainly, in the point where he was imperfect he was to be made whole, in accordance with the words of the Lord, in which He says, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Therefore both some things are done outside in the name of Christ not against the Church, and some things are done inside on the devil's part which are against the Church.

#### CHAPTER 11

18. What shall we say of what is also wonderful, that he who carefully observes may find that it is possible that certain persons, without violating Christian charity, may yet teach what is useless, as Peter wished to compel the Gentiles to observe Jewish customs, as Cyprian himself would force heretics to be baptized anew? whence the apostle says to such good members, who are rooted in charity, and yet walk not rightly in some points, "If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you;" and that some again, though devoid of charity, may teach something wholesome? of whom the Lord says, "The scribes and the

Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not." Whence the apostle also says of those envious and malicious ones who yet preach salvation through Christ, "Whether in pretense, or in truth, let Christ be preached." Wherefore, both within and without, the waywardness of man is to be corrected, but the divine sacraments and utterances are not to be attributed to men. He is not, therefore, a "patron of heretics" who refuses to attribute to them what he knows not to belong to them, even though it be found among them. We do not grant baptism to be theirs; but we recognize His baptism of whom it is said, "The same is He which baptizeth," wheresoever we find it. But if "the treacherous and blasphemous man" continue in his treachery and blasphemy, he receives no "remission of sins either without" or within the Church; or if, by the power of the sacrament, he receives it for the moment, the same force operates both without and within, as the power of the name of Christ used to work the expulsion of devils even without the Church

## CHAPTER 12

19. But he urges that "we find that the apostles, in all their epistles, execrated and abhorred the sacrilegious wickedness of heretics, so as to say that their word does spread as a canker." "What then? Does not Paul also show that those who said, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," were corrupters of good manners by their evil communications, adding immediately afterwards, "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" and yet he intimated that these were within the Church when he says, "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" But when does he fail to express his abhorrence of the covetous? Or could anything be said in stronger terms, than that covetousness should be called idolatry, as the same apostle declared? Nor did Cyprian understand his language otherwise, inserting it when need required in his letters; though he confesses that in his time there were in the Church not covetous men of an ordinary type, but robbers and usurers, and these found not among the masses, but among the bishops. And yet I should be willing to understand that those of whom the apostle says, "Their word does spread as a canker," were without the Church, but Cyprian himself will not allow me. For, when showing, in his

letter to Antonianus, that no man ought to sever himself from the unity of the Church before the time of the final separation of the just and unjust, merely because of the admixture of evil men in the Church, when he makes it manifest how holy he was, and deserving of the illustrious martyrdom which he won, he says, “What swelling of arrogance it is, what forgetfulness of humility and gentleness, that any one should dare or believe that he can do what the Lord did not grant even to the apostles,—to think that he can distinguish the tares from the wheat, or, as if it were granted to him to carry the fan and purge the floor, to endeavor to separate the chaff from the grain! And whereas the apostle says, But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth,’ that he should seem to choose those of gold and of silver, and despise and cast away and condemn those of wood and of earth, when really the vessels of wood are only to be burned in the day of the Lord by the burning of the divine conflagration, and those of earth are to be broken by Him to whom the rod of iron has been given.”“ By this argument, therefore, against those who, under the pretext of avoiding the society of wicked men, had severed themselves from the unity of the Church, Cyprian shows that by the great house of which the apostle spoke, in which there were not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, he understood nothing else but the Church, in which there should be good and bad, till at the last day it should be cleansed as a threshing-floor by the winnowing-fan. And if this be so, in the Church herself, that is, in the great house itself, there were vessels to dishonor, whose word did spread like a canker. For the apostle, speaking of them, taught as follows: “And their word,” he says, “will spread as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth.” If, therefore, they whose words did spread as doth a canker were as it were vessels to dishonor in the great house, and by that “great house” Cyprian understands the unity of the Church itself, surely it cannot be that their canker polluted the baptism of Christ. Accordingly, neither without, any more than within, can any one who is of the devil’s party, either in himself

or in any other person, stain the sacrament which is of Christ. It is not, therefore, the case that “the word which spreads as a canker to the ears of those who hear it gives remission of sins;” but when baptism is given in the words of the gospel, however great be the perverseness of understanding on the part either of him through whom, or of him to whom it is given, the sacrament itself is holy in itself on account of Him whose sacrament it is. And if any one, receiving it at the hands of a misguided man, yet does not receive the perversity of the minister, but only the holiness of the mystery, being closely bound to the unity of the Church in good faith and hope and charity, he receives remission of his sins,—not by the words which do eat as doth a canker, but by the sacraments of the gospel flowing from a heavenly source. But if the recipient himself be misguided, on the one hand, what is given is of no avail for the salvation of the misguided man; and yet, on the other hand, that which is received remains holy in the recipient, and is not renewed to him if he be brought to the right way

#### CHAPTER 13

20. There is therefore “no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness,” not only without, but also within the Church; for “the Lord knoweth them that are His,” and “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” There is also “no communion between light and darkness,” not only without, but also within the Church; for “he that hateth his brother is still in darkness.” And they at any rate hated Paul, who, preaching Christ of envy and malicious strife, supposed that they added affliction to his bonds; and yet the same Cyprian understands these still to have been within the Church. Since, therefore, “neither darkness can enlighten, nor unrighteousness justify,” as Cyprian again says, I ask, how could those men baptize within the very Church herself? I ask, how could those vessels which the large house contains not to honor, but to dishonor, administer what is holy for the sanctifying of men within the great house itself, unless because that holiness of the sacrament cannot be polluted even by the unclean, either when it is given at their hands, or when it is received by those who in heart and life are not changed for the better? of whom, as situated within the Church, Cyprian himself says, “Renouncing the world in word only, and not in deed.”

21. There are therefore also within the Church “enemies of God, whose hearts the spirit of Antichrist has possessed;” and yet they, “deal with spiritual and divine things,” which cannot profit for their salvation so long as they remain such as they are; and yet neither can they pollute them by their own uncleanness. With regard to what he says, therefore, “that they have no part given them in the saving grace of the Church, who, scattering and fighting against the Church of Christ, are called adversaries by Christ Himself, and antichrists by His apostles, this must be received under the consideration that there are men of this kind both within and without. But the separation of those that are within from the perfection and unity of the dove is not only known in the case of some men to God, but even in the case of some to their fellow-men; for, by regarding their openly abandoned life and confirmed wickedness, and comparing it with the rules of God’s commandments, they understand to what a multitude of tares and chaff, situated now some within and some without, but destined to be most manifestly separated at the last day, the Lord will then say, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity,” and “Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

#### CHAPTER 14

22. But we must not despair of the conversion of any man, whether situated within or without, so long as “the goodness of God leadeth him to repentance,” and “visits their transgressions with the rod, and their inquiry with stripes.” For in this way “He does not utterly take from them His loving-kindness,” if they will themselves sometimes “love their own soul, pleasing God.” But as the good man “that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved,” so the bad man, whether within or without, who shall persevere in his wickedness to the end, shall not be saved. Nor do we say that “all, wheresoever and howsoever baptized, obtain the grace of baptism,” if by the grace of baptism is understood the actual salvation which is conferred by the celebration of the sacrament; but many fail to obtain this salvation even within the Church, although it is clear that they possess the sacrament, which is holy in itself. Well, therefore, does the Lord warn us in the gospel that we should not company with ill-advisers, who walk under the pretence of Christ’s name; but these are found both within

and without, as, in fact, they do not proceed without unless they have first been ill-disposed within. And we know that the apostle said of the vessels placed in the great house, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." But in what manner each man ought to purge himself from these he shows a little above, saying, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," that he may not in the last day, with the chaff, whether with that which has already been driven from the threshing-floor, or with that which is to be separated at the last, hear the command, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Whence it appears, indeed, as Cyprian says, that "we are not at once to admit and adopt whatsoever is professed in the name of Christ, but only what is done in the truth of Christ." But it is not an action done in the truth of Christ that men should "seize on estates by fraudulent pretenses, and increase their gains by accumulated usury," or that they should "renounce the world in word only;" and yet, that all this is done within the Church, Cyprian himself bears sufficient testimony

## CHAPTER 15

23. To go on to the point which he pursues at great length, that "they who blaspheme the Father of Christ cannot be baptized in Christ," since it is clear that they blaspheme through error (for he who comes to the baptism of Christ will not openly blaspheme the Father of Christ, but he is led to blaspheme by holding a view contrary to the teaching of the truth about the Father of Christ), we have already shown at sufficient length that baptism, consecrated in the words of the gospel, is not affected by the error of any man, whether ministrant or recipient, whether he hold views contrary to the revelation of divine teaching on the subject of the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost. For many carnal and natural men are baptized even within the Church, as the apostle expressly says: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;" and after they had received baptism, he says that they "are yet carnal." But according to it carnal sense, a soul given up to fleshly appetites cannot entertain but fleshly wisdom about God. Wherefore many, progressing after baptism, and especially those who have been baptized in infancy or early youth, in proportion as their intellect

becomes clearer and brighter, while “the inward man is renewed day by day,” throw away their former opinions which they held about God while they were mocked with vain imaginings, with scorn and horror and confession of their mistake. And yet they are not therefore considered not to have received baptism, or to have received baptism of a kind corresponding to their error; but in them both the perfection of the sacrament is honored and the delusion of their mind is corrected, even though it had become inveterate through long confirmation, or been, perhaps, maintained in many controversies. Wherefore even the heretic, who is manifestly without, if he has there received baptism as ordained in the gospel, has certainly not received baptism of a kind corresponding to the error which blinds him. And therefore, in returning into the way of wisdom he perceives that he ought to relinquish what he has held amiss, he must not at the same time give up the good which he had received; nor because his error is to be condemned, is the baptism of Christ in him to be therefore extinguished. For it is already sufficiently clear, from the case of those who happen to be baptized within the Church with false views about God, that the truth of the sacrament is to be distinguished from the error of him who believes amiss, although both may be found in the same man. And therefore, when any one grounded in any error, even outside the Church, has yet been baptized with the true sacrament, when he is restored to the unity of the Church, a true baptism cannot take the place of a true baptism, as a true faith takes the place of a false one, because a thing cannot take the place of itself, since neither can it give place. Heretics therefore join the Catholic Church to this end, that what they have evil of themselves may be corrected, not that what they have good of God should be repeated

#### CHAPTER 16

24. Some one says, Does it then make no difference, if two men, rooted in like error and wickedness, be baptized without change of life or heart, one without, the other within the Church? I acknowledge that there is a difference. For he is worse who is baptized without, in addition to his other sin,—not because of his baptism, however, but because he is without; for the evil of division is in itself far from insignificant or trivial. Yet the difference exists only if he who is baptized within has desired to be within

not for the sake of any earthly or temporal advantage, but because he has preferred the unity of the Church spread throughout the world to the divisions of schism; otherwise he too must be considered among those who are without. Let us therefore put the two cases in this way. Let us suppose that the one, for the sake of argument, held the same opinions as Photinus about Christ, and was baptized in his heresy outside the communion of the Catholic Church; and that another held the same opinion but was baptized in the Catholic Church, believing that his view was really the Catholic faith. I consider him as not yet a heretic, unless, when the doctrine of the Catholic faith is made clear to him, he chooses to resist it, and prefers that which he already holds; and till this is the case, it is clear that he who was baptized outside is the worse. And so in the one case erroneous opinion alone, in the other the sin of schism also, requires correction; but in neither of them is the truth of the sacrament to be repeated. But if any one holds the same view as the first, and knows that it is only in heresy severed from the Church that such a view is taught or learned, but yet for the sake of some temporal emolument has desired to be baptized in the Catholic unity, or, having been already baptized in it, is unwilling on account of the said emolument to secede from it, he is not only to be considered as seceding, but his offense is aggravated, in so far as to the error of heresy and the division of unity he adds the deceit of hypocrisy. Wherefore the depravity of each man, in proportion as it is more dangerous and wanting in straightforwardness, must be corrected with the more earnestness and energy; and yet, if he has anything that is good in him, especially if it be not of himself, but from God, we ought not to think it of no value because of his depravity, or to be blamed like it, or to be ascribed to it, rather than to His bountiful goodness, who even to a soul that plays the harlot, and goes after her lovers, yet gives His bread, and His wine, and His oil, and other food or ornaments, which are neither from herself nor from her lovers, but from Him who in compassion for her is even desirous to warn her to whom she should return

#### CHAPTER 17

25. "Can the power of baptism," says Cyprian, "be greater or better than confession? than martyrdom? that a man should confess Christ before men, and be baptized in his own blood? And yet," he goes on to say, "neither



does this baptism profit the heretic, even though for confessing Christ he be put to death outside the Church.” This is most true; for, by being put to death outside the Church, he is proved not to have had charity, of which the apostle says, “Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” But if martyrdom is of no avail for this reason, because it has not charity, neither does it profit those who, as Paul says, and Cyprian further sets forth, are living within the Church without charity in envy and malice; and yet they can both receive and transmit true baptism. “Salvation,” he says, “is not without the Church.” Who says that it is? And therefore, whatever men have that belongs to the Church, it profits them nothing towards salvation outside the Church. But it is one thing not to have, another to have so as to be of no use. He who has not must be baptized that he may have; but he who has to no avail must be corrected, that what he has may profit him. Nor is the water in the baptism of heretics “adulterous,” because neither is the creature itself which God made evil, nor is fault to be found with the words of the gospel in the mouths of any who are astray; but the fault is theirs in whom there is an adulterous spirit, even though it may receive the adornment of the sacrament from a lawful spouse. Baptism therefore can “be common to us, and the heretics,” just as the gospel can be common to us, whatever difference there may be between our faith and their error,—whether they think otherwise than the truth about the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; or, being cut away from unity, do not gather with Christ, but scatter abroad,—seeing that the sacrament of baptism can be common to us, if we are the wheat of the Lord, with the covetous within the Church, and with robbers, and drunkards, and other pestilent persons of the same sort, of whom it is said, “They shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” and yet the vices by which they are separated from the kingdom of God are not shared by us

## CHAPTER 18

26. Nor indeed, is it of heresies alone that the apostle says “that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” But it may be worth while to look for a moment at the things which he groups together. “The works of the flesh,” he says “are manifest, which are these; fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance,

emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Let us suppose some one, therefore, chaste, continent, free from covetousness, no idolater, hospitable, charitable to the needy, no man’s enemy, not contentious, patient, quiet, jealous of none, envying none, sober, frugal, but a heretic; it is of course clear to all that for this one fault only, that he is a heretic, he will fail to inherit the kingdom of God. Let us suppose another, a fornicator, unclean, lascivious, covetous, or even more openly given to idolatry, a student of witchcraft, a lover of strife and contention, envious, hot-tempered, seditious, jealous, drunken, and a reveller, but a Catholic; can it be that for this sole merit, that he is a Catholic, he will inherit the kingdom of God, though his deeds are of the kind of which the apostle thus concludes: “Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God?” If we say this, we lead ourselves astray. For the word of God does not lead us astray, which is neither silent, nor lenient, nor deceptive through any flattery. Indeed, it speaks to the same effect elsewhere: “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words.” We have no reason, therefore, to complain of the word of God. It certainly says, and says openly and freely, that those who live a wicked life have no part in the kingdom of God

#### CHAPTER 19

27. Let us therefore not flatter the Catholic who is hemmed in with all these vices, nor venture, merely because he is a Catholic Christian, to promise him the impunity which holy Scripture does not promise him; nor, if he has any one of the faults above mentioned, ought we to promise him a partnership in that heavenly land. For, in writing to the Corinthians, the apostle enumerates the several sins, under each of which it is implicitly understood that it shall not inherit the kingdom of God: “Be not deceived,” he says: “neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor

drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” He does not say, those who possess all these vices together shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but neither these nor those: so that, as each is named, you may understand that no one of them shall inherit the kingdom of God. As, therefore, heretics shall not possess the kingdom of God, so the covetous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Nor can we indeed doubt that the punishments themselves, with which they shall be tortured who do not inherit the kingdom of God, will vary in proportion to the difference of their offences, and that some will be more severe than others; so that in the eternal fire itself there will be different tortures in the punishments, corresponding to the different weights of guilt. For indeed it was not idly that the Lord said, “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.” But yet, so far as failing to inherit the kingdom of God is concerned, it is just as certain, if you choose any one of the less heinous of these vices, as if you choose more than one, or some one which you saw was more atrocious; and because those will inherit the kingdom of God whom the Judge shall set on His right hand, and for those who shall not be found worthy to be set at the right hand nothing will remain but to be at the left, no other announcement is left for them to hear like goats from the mouth of the Shepherd, except, “Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;” though in that fire, as I said before, it may be that different punishments will be awarded corresponding to the difference of the sins

## CHAPTER 20

28. But on the question whether we ought to prefer a Catholic of the most abandoned character to a heretic in whose life, except that he is a heretic, men can find nothing to blame, I do not venture to give a hasty judgment. But if any one says, because he is a heretic, he cannot be this only without other vices also following,—for he is carnal and natural, and therefore must be also envious, and hot-tempered, and jealous, and hostile to truth itself, and utterly estranged from it,—let him fairly understand, that of those other faults of which he is supposed to have chosen some one less flagrant, a single one cannot exist by itself in any man, because he in turn is carnal and natural; as, to take the case of drunkenness, which people have now become

accustomed to talk of not only without horror, but with some degree of merriment, can it possibly exist alone in any one in whom it is found? For what drunkard is not also contentious, and hot-tempered, and jealous, and at variance with all soundness of counsel, and at grievous enmity with those who rebuke him? Further, it is not easy for him to avoid being a fornicator and adulterer, though he may be no heretic; just as a heretic may be no drunkard, nor adulterer, nor fornicator, nor lascivious, nor a lover of money, or given to witchcraft, and cannot well be all these together. Nor indeed is any one vice followed by all the rest. Supposing, therefore, two men,—one a Catholic with all these vices, the other a heretic free from all from which a heretic can be free,—although they do not both contend against the faith, and yet each lives contrary to the faith, and each is deceived by a vain hope, and each is far removed from charity of spirit, and therefore each is severed from connection with the body of the one dove; why do we recognise in one of them the sacrament of Christ, and not in the other, as though it belonged to this or that man, whilst really it is the same in both, and belongs to God alone, and is good even in the worst of men? And if of the men who have it, one is worse than another, it does not follow that the sacrament which they have is worse in the one than in the other, seeing that neither in the case of two bad Catholics, if one be worse than the other, does he possess a worse baptism, nor, if one of them be good and another bad, is baptism bad in the bad one and good in the good one; but it is good in both. Just as the light of the sun, or even of a lamp, is certainly not less brilliant when displayed to bad eyes than when seen by better ones; but it is the same in the case of both, although it either cheers or hurts them differently according to the difference of their powers

## CHAPTER 21

29. With regard to the objection brought against Cyprian, that the catechumens who were seized in martyrdom, and slain for Christ's name's sake, received a crown even without baptism, I do not quite see what it has to do with the matter, unless, indeed, they urged that heretics could much more be admitted with baptism to Christ's kingdom, to which catechumens were admitted without it, since He Himself has said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Now,

in this matter I do not hesitate for a moment to place the Catholic catechumen, who is burning with love for God, before the baptized heretic; nor yet do we thereby do dishonor to the sacrament of baptism which the latter has already received, the former not as yet; nor do we consider that the sacrament of the catechumen is to be preferred to the sacrament of baptism, when we acknowledge that some catechumens are better and more faithful than some baptized persons. For the centurion Cornelius, before baptism, was better than Simon, who had been baptized. For Cornelius, even before his baptism, was filled with the Holy Spirit; Simon, even after baptism, was puffed up with an unclean spirit. Cornelius, however, would have been convicted of contempt for so holy a sacrament, if, even after he had received the Holy Ghost, he had refused to be baptized. But when he was baptized, he received in no wise a better sacrament than Simon; but the different merits of the men were made manifest under the equal holiness of the same sacrament—so true is it that the good or ill deserving of the recipient does not increase or diminish the holiness of baptism. But as baptism is wanting to a good catechumen to his receiving the kingdom of heaven, so true conversion is wanting to a bad man though baptized. For He who said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,” said also Himself, “except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” For that the righteousness of the catechumens might not feel secure, it is written, “Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” And again, that the unrighteousness of the baptized might not feel secure because they had received baptism, it is written, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The one were too little without the other; the two make perfect the heir of that inheritance. As, then, we ought not to depreciate a man’s righteousness, which begins to exist before he is joined to the Church, as the righteousness of Cornelius began to exist before he was in the body of Christian men,—which righteousness was not thought worthless, or the angel would not have said to him, “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up as a memorial before God;” nor did it yet suffice for his obtaining the kingdom of heaven, or he would not have been told to send to Peter,—so neither ought we to depreciate the sacrament of baptism, even

though it has been received outside the Church. But since it is of no avail for salvation unless he who has baptism indeed in full perfection be incorporated into the Church, correcting also his own depravity, let us therefore correct the error of the heretics, that we may recognize what in them is not their own but Christ's

## CHAPTER 22

30. That the place of baptism is sometimes supplied by martyrdom is supported by an argument by no means trivial, which the blessed Cyprian adduces from the thief, to whom, though he was not baptized, it was yet said, "To-day shall thou be with me in Paradise." On considering which, again and again, I find that not only martyrdom for the sake of Christ may supply what was wanting of baptism, but also faith and conversion of heart, if recourse may not be had to the celebration of the mystery of baptism for want of time. For neither was that thief crucified for the name of Christ, but as the reward of his own deeds; nor did he suffer because he believed, but he believed while suffering. It was shown, therefore, in the case of that thief, how great is the power, even without the visible sacrament of baptism, of what the apostle says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." But the want is supplied invisibly only when the administration of baptism is prevented, not by contempt for religion, but by the necessity of the moment. For much more in the case of Cornelius and his friends, than in the case of that robber, might it seem superfluous that they should also be baptized with water, seeing that in them the gift of the Holy Spirit, which, according to the testimony of holy Scripture, was received by other men only after baptism, had made itself manifest by every unmistakable sign appropriate to those times when they spoke with tongues. Yet they were baptized, and for this action we have the authority of an apostle as the warrant. So far ought all of us to be from being induced by any imperfection in the inner man, if it so happen that before baptism a person has advanced, through the workings of a pious heart, to spiritual understanding, to despise a sacrament which is applied to the body by the hands of the minister, but which is God's own means for working spiritually a man's dedication to Himself. Nor do I conceive that the function of baptizing was assigned to John, so that it

should be called John's baptism, for any other reason except that the Lord Himself, who had appointed it, in not disdaining to receive the baptism of His servant, might consecrate the path of humility, and show most plainly by such an action how high a value was to be placed on His own baptism, with which He Himself was afterwards to baptize. For He saw, like an excellent physician of eternal salvation, that overweening pride would be found in some, who, having made such progress in the understanding of the truth and in uprightness of character that they would not hesitate to place themselves, both in life and knowledge, above many that were baptized, would think it was unnecessary for them to be baptized, since they felt that they had attained a frame of mind to which many that were baptized were still only endeavoring to raise themselves

#### CHAPTER 23

31. But what is the precise value of the sanctification of the sacrament (which that thief did not receive, not from any want of will on his part, but because it was unavoidably omitted) and what is the effect on a man of its material application, it is not easy to say. Still, had it not been of the greatest value, the Lord would not have received the baptism of a servant. But since we must look at it in itself, without entering upon the question of the salvation of the recipient, which it is intended to work, it shows clearly enough that both in the bad, and in those who renounce the world in word and not in deed, it is itself complete, though they cannot receive salvation unless they amend their lives. But as in the thief, to whom the material administration of the sacrament was necessarily wanting, the salvation was complete, because it was spiritually present through his piety, so, when the sacrament itself is present, salvation is complete, if what the thief possessed be unavoidably wanting. And this is the firm tradition of the universal Church, in respect of the baptism of infants, who certainly are as yet unable "with the heart to believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth to make confession unto salvation," as the thief could do; nay, who even, by crying and moaning when the mystery is performed upon them, raise their voices in opposition to the mysterious words, and yet no Christian will say that they are baptized to no purpose

32. And if any one seek for divine authority in this matter, though what is held by the whole Church, and that not as instituted by Councils, but as a matter of invariable custom, is rightly held to have been handed down by apostolical authority, still we can form a true conjecture of the value of the sacrament of baptism in the case of infants, from the parallel of circumcision, which was received by God's earlier people, and before receiving which Abraham was justified, as Cornelius also was enriched with the gift of the Holy Spirit before he was baptized. Yet the apostle says of Abraham himself, that "he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith," having already believed in his heart, so that "it was counted unto him for righteousness." Why, therefore, was it commanded him that he should circumcise every male child in order on the eighth day, though it could not yet believe with the heart, that it should be counted unto it for righteousness, because the sacrament in itself was of great avail? And this was made manifest by the message of an angel in the case of Moses' son; for when he was carried by his mother, being yet uncircumcised, it was required, by manifest present peril, that he should be circumcised, and when this was done, the danger of death was removed. As therefore in Abraham the justification of faith came first, and circumcision was added afterwards as the seal of faith; so in Cornelius the spiritual sanctification came first in the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the sacrament of regeneration was added afterwards in the laver of baptism. And as in Isaac, who was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth, the seal of this righteousness of faith was given first, and afterwards, as he imitated the faith of his father, the righteousness itself followed as he grew up, of which the seal had been given before when he was an infant; so in infants, who are baptized, the sacrament of regeneration is given first, and if they maintain a Christian piety, conversion also in the heart will follow, of which the mysterious sign had gone before in the outward body. And as in the thief the gracious goodness of the Almighty supplied what had been wanting in the sacrament of baptism, because it had been missing not from pride or contempt, but from want of opportunity; so in infants who die baptized, we must believe that the same grace of the Almighty supplies the want, that, not from perversity of will, but from insufficiency of age, they can neither



believe with the heart unto righteousness, nor make confession with the mouth unto salvation. Therefore, when others take the vows for them, that the celebration of the sacrament may be complete in their behalf, it is unquestionably of avail for their dedication to God, because they cannot answer for themselves. But if another were to answer for one who could answer for himself, it would not be of the same avail. In accordance with which rule, we find in the gospel what strikes every one as natural when he reads it, "He is of age, he shall speak for himself."

#### CHAPTER 25

33. By all these considerations it is proved that the sacrament of baptism is one thing, the conversion of the heart another; but that man's salvation is made complete through the two together. Nor are we to suppose that, if one of these be wanting, it necessarily follows that the other is wanting also; because the sacrament may exist in the infant without the conversion of the heart; and this was found to be possible without the sacrament in the case of the thief, God in either case filling up what was involuntarily wanting. But when either of these requisites is wanting intentionally, then the man is responsible for the omission. And baptism may exist when the conversion of the heart is wanting; but, with respect to such conversion, it may indeed be found when baptism has not been received, but never when it has been despised. Nor can there be said in any way to be a turning of the heart to God when the sacrament of God is treated with contempt. Therefore we are right in censuring, anathematizing, abhorring, and abominating the perversity of heart shown by heretics; yet it does not follow that they have not the sacrament of the gospel, because they have not what makes it of avail. Wherefore, when they come to the true faith, and by penitence seek remission of their sins, we are not flattering or deceiving them, when we instruct them by heavenly discipline for the kingdom of heaven, correcting and reforming in them their errors and perverseness, to the intent that we may by no means do violence to what is sound in them, nor, because of man's fault, declare that anything which he may have in him from God is either valueless or faulty

#### CHAPTER 26

34. A few things still remain to be noticed in the epistle to Jubaianus; but since these will raise the question both of the past custom of the Church and of the baptism of John, which is wont to excite no small doubt in those who pay slight attention to a matter which is sufficiently obvious, seeing that those who had received the baptism of John were commanded by the apostle to be baptized again they are not to be treated in a hasty manner, and had better be reserved for another book, that the dimensions of this may not be inconveniently large

# Book V

He examines the last part of the epistle of Cyprian to Jubaianus, together with his epistle to Quintus, the letter of the African synod to the Numidian bishops, and Cyprian's epistle to Pompeius.

## CHAPTER 1

1. We have the testimony of the blessed Cyprian, that the custom of the Catholic Church is at present retained, when men coming from the side of heretics or schismatics, if they have received baptism as consecrated in the words of the gospel, are not baptized afresh. For he himself proposed to himself the question, and that as coming from the mouth of brethren either seeking the truth or contending for the truth. For in the course of the arguments by which he wished to show that heretics should be baptized again, which we have sufficiently considered for our present purpose in the former books, he says: "But some will say, What then will become of those who in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism?" In this question is involved the shipwreck of the whole cause of the Donatists, with whom our contest is on this point. For if those had not really baptism who were thus received on coming from heretics, and their sins were still upon them, then, when such men were admitted to communion, either by those who came before Cyprian or by Cyprian himself, we must acknowledge that one of two things occurred,—either that the Church perished then and there from the pollution of communion with such men, or that any one abiding in unity is not injured by even the notorious sins of other men. But since they cannot say that the Church then perished through the contamination arising from communion with those who, as Cyprian says, were admitted into it without baptism—for otherwise they cannot maintain the validity of their own origin if the Church then perished, seeing that the list of consuls proves that more than forty years

elapsed between the martyrdom of Cyprian and the burning of the sacred books, from which they took occasion to make a schism, spreading abroad the smoke of their calumnies,—it therefore is left for them to acknowledge that the unity of Christ is not polluted by any such communion, even with known offenders. And, after this confession, they will be unable to discover any reason which will justify them in maintaining that they were bound to separate from the churches of the whole world, which, as we read, were equally founded by the apostles, seeing that, while the others could not have perished from any admixture of offenders, of whatsoever kind, they, though they would not have perished if they had remained in unity with them, brought destruction on themselves in schism, by separating themselves from their brethren, and breaking the bond of peace. For the sacrilege of schism is most clearly evident in them, if they had no sufficient cause for separation. And it is clear that there was no sufficient cause for separation, if even the presence of notorious offenders cannot pollute the good while they abide in unity. But that the good, abiding in unity, are not polluted even by notorious offenders, we teach on the testimony of Cyprian, who says that “men in past times, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism;” and yet, if the wickedness of their sacrilege, which was still upon them, seeing it had not been purged away by baptism, could not pollute and destroy the holiness of the Church, it cannot perish by any infection from wicked men. Wherefore, if they allow that Cyprian spoke the truth, they are convicted of schism on his testimony; if they maintain that he does not speak truth, let them not use his testimony on the question of baptism

## CHAPTER 2

2. But now that we have begun a disputation with a man of peace like Cyprian, let us go on. For when he had brought an objection against himself, which he knew was urged by his brethren, “What then will become of those who in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism? The Lord,” he answers, “is able of His mercy to grant indulgence, and not to separate from the gifts of His Church those who, being admitted in all honesty to His Church, have fallen asleep within the Church.” Well indeed has he assumed that charity can cover the

multitude of sins. But if they really had baptism, and this were not rightly perceived by those who thought that they should be baptized again, that error was covered by the charity of unity so long as it contained, not the discord and spirit of the devil, but merely human infirmity, until, as the apostle says, “if they were otherwise minded, the Lord should reveal it to them.” But woe unto those who, being torn asunder from unity by a sacrilegious rupture, either rebaptize, if baptism exists with both us and them, or do not baptize at all, if baptism exist in the Catholic Church only. Whether, therefore, they rebaptize, or fail to baptize, they are not in the bond of peace; wherefore let them apply a remedy to which they please of these two wounds. But if we admit to the Church without baptism, we are of the number of those who, as Cyprian has assumed, may receive pardon because they preserved unity. But if (as is, I think, already clear from what has been said in the earlier books) Christian baptism can preserve its integrity even amid the perversity of heretics, then even though any in those times did rebaptize, yet without departing from the bond of unity, they might still attain to pardon in virtue of that same love of peace, through which Cyprian bears witness that those admitted even without baptism might obtain that they should not be separated from the gifts of the Church. Further, if it is true that with heretics and schismatics the baptism of Christ does not exist, how much less could the sins of others hurt those who were fixed in unity, if even men’s own sins were forgiven when they came to it even without baptism! For if, according to Cyprian, the bond of unity is of such efficacy, how could they be hurt by other men’s sins, who were unwilling to separate themselves from unity, if even the unbaptized, who wished to come to it from heresy, thereby escaped the destruction due to their own sins?

#### CHAPTER. 3

3. But in what Cyprian adds, saying, “Nor yet because men once have erred must there be always error, since it rather befits wise and God-fearing men gladly and unhesitatingly to follow truth, when it is clearly laid before their eyes, than obstinately and persistently to fight for heretics against their brethren and their fellow-priests,” he is uttering the most perfect truth; and the man who resists the manifest truth is opposing himself rather than his

neighbors. But, so far as I can judge, it is perfectly clear and certain, from the many arguments which I have already adduced, that the baptism of Christ cannot be invalidated even by the perversity of heretics, when it is given or received among them. But, granting that it is not yet certain, at any rate no one who has considered what has been said, even from a hostile point of view, will assert that the question has been decided the other way. Therefore we are not striving against manifest truth, but either, as I think, we are striving in behalf of what is clearly true, or, at any rate, as those may hold who think that the question has not yet been solved, we are seeking for the truth. And therefore, if the truth be other than we think, yet we are receiving those baptized by heretics with the same honesty of heart with which those received them whom, Cyprian supposed, in virtue of their cleaving to the unity of the Church, to be capable of pardon. But if the baptism of Christ, as is indicated by the many arguments used above, can retain its integrity amid any defect either of life or faith, whether on the part of those who seem to be within, and yet do not belong to the members of the one dove or on the part of those whose severance from her extends to being openly without, then those who sought its repetition in those former days deserved the same pardon for their charity in clinging to unity, which Cyprian thought that those deserved for charity of the same kind whom he believed to have been admitted without baptism. They therefore who, without any cause (since, as Cyprian himself shows, the bad cannot hurt the good in the unity of the Church), have cut themselves off from the charity which is shown in this unity, have lost all place of pardon, and whilst they would incur destruction by the very crime of schism, even though they did not rebaptize those who had been baptized in the Catholic Church, of how bitter punishment are they deserving, who are either endeavoring to give to the Catholics who have it what Cyprian affirms that they themselves have not, or, as is clear from the facts of the case, are bringing as a charge against the Catholic Church that she has not what even they themselves possess?

#### CHAPTER 4

4. But since now, as I said before, we have begun a disputation with the epistles of Cyprian, I think that I should not seem even to him, if he were present, “to be contending obstinately and persistently in defense of heretics

against my brethren and my fellow-priests,” when he learned the powerful reasons which move us to believe that even among heretics, who are perversely obstinate in their malignant error, the baptism of Christ is yet in itself most holy, and most highly to be revered. And seeing that he himself, whose testimony has such weight with us, bears witness that they were wont in past times to be admitted without a second baptism, I would have any one, who is induced by Cyprian’s arguments to hold it as certain that heretics ought to be baptized afresh, yet consider that those who, on account of weight of the arguments on the other side, are not as yet persuaded that this should be so, hold the same place as those in past time, who in all honesty admitted men who were baptized in heresy on the simple correction of their individual error, and who were capable of salvation with them in virtue of the bond of unity. And let any one, who is led by the past custom of the Church, and by the subsequent authority of a plenary Council, and by so many powerful proofs from holy Scripture, and by much evidence from Cyprian himself, and by the clear reasoning of truth, to understand that the baptism of Christ, consecrated in the words of the gospel, cannot be perverted by the error of any man on earth,—let such an one understand, that they who then thought otherwise, but yet preserved their charity, can be saved by the same bond of unity. And herein he should also understand of those who, in the society of the Church dispersed throughout the world, could not have been defiled by any tares, by any chaff, so long as they themselves desired to be fruitful corn, and who therefore severed themselves from the same bond of unity without any cause for the divorce, that at any rate, whichever of the two opinions be true,—that which Cyprian then held, or that which was maintained by the universal voice of the Catholic Church, which Cyprian did not abandon,—in either case they, having most openly placed themselves outside in the plain sacrilege of schism, cannot possibly be saved, and all that they possess of the holy sacraments, and of the free gifts of the one legitimate Bridegroom, is of avail, while they continue what they are, for their confusion rather than the salvation of their souls

5. Wherefore, even if heretics should be truly anxious to correct their error and come to the Church, for the very reason that they believed that they had no baptism unless they received it in the Church, even under these circumstances we should not be bound to yield to their desire for the repetition of baptism; but rather they should be taught, on the one hand, that baptism, though perfect in itself, could in no way profit their perversity if they would not submit to be corrected; and, on the other hand, that the perfection of baptism could not be impaired by their perversity, while refusing to be corrected: and again, that no further perfection is added to baptism in them because they are submitting to correction; but that, while they themselves are quitting their iniquity, that which was before within them to their destruction is now beginning to be of profit for salvation. For, learning this, they will both recognize the need of salvation in Catholic unity, and will cease to claim as their own what is really Christ's, and will not confound the sacrament of truth, although existing in themselves, with their own individual error

6. To this we may add a further reason, that men, by a sort of hidden inspiration from heaven, shrink from any one who for the second time receives baptism which he had already received in any quarter whatsoever, insomuch that the very heretics themselves, when their arguments start with that subject, rub their forehead in perplexity, and almost all their laity, even those who have grown old in their body, and have conceived an obstinate animosity against the Catholic Church, confess that this one point in their system displeases them; and many who, for the sake of gaining some secular advantage, or avoiding some disadvantage, wish to secede to them, strive with many secret efforts that they may have granted to them, as a peculiar and individual privilege, that they should not be rebaptized; and some, who are led to place credence in their other vain delusions and false accusations against the Catholic Church, are recalled to unity by this one consideration, that they are unwilling to associate with them lest they should be compelled to be rebaptized. And the Donatists, through fear of this feeling, which has so thorough possession of all men's hearts, have consented to acknowledge the baptism which was conferred among the followers of Maximianus, whom they had condemned, and so to cut short their own tongues and close their mouths, in preference to baptizing again



so many men of the people of Musti, and Assuræ, and other districts, whom they received with Felicianus and Praetextatus, and the others who had been condemned by them and afterwards returned to them.

## CHAPTER 6

7. For when this is done occasionally in the case of individuals, at great intervals of time and space, the enormity of the deed is not equally felt; but if all were suddenly to be brought together who had been baptized in course of time by the aforesaid followers of Maximianus, either under pressure of the peril of death or at their Easter solemnities, and it were told them that they must be baptized again, because what they had already received in the sacrilege of schism was null and void, they might indeed say what obstinate perseverance in their error would compel them to say, that they might hide the rigor and iciness of their hardness under any kind of false shade of consistency against the warmth of truth. But in fact, because the party of Maximianus could not bear this, and because the very men who would have to enforce it could not endure what must needs have been done in the case of so many men at once, especially as those very men would be rebaptizing them in the party of Primianus who had already baptized them in the party of Maximianus, for these reasons their baptism was received, and the pride of the Donatists was cut short. And this course they would certainly not have chosen to adopt, had they not thought that more harm would have been done to their cause by the offense men would have taken at the repetition of the baptism, than by the reputation lost in abandoning their defense. And this I would not say with any idea that we ought to be restrained by consideration of human feelings, if the truth compelled those who came from heretics to be baptized afresh. But because the holy Cyprian says, “that heretics might have been all the more impelled to the necessity of coming over, if only they were to be rebaptized in the Catholic Church,” on this account I have wished to place on record the intensity of the repugnance to this act which is seated deeply in the heart of nearly every one,—a repugnance which I can believe was inspired by God Himself, that the Church might be fortified by the instinct of repugnance against any possible arguments which the weak cannot dispel

## CHAPTER 7

8. Truly, when I look at the actual words of Cyprian, I am warned to say some things which are very necessary for the solution of this question. “For if they were to see,” he says, “that it was settled and established by our formal decision and vote, that the baptism with which they are baptized in heresy is considered just and lawful, they will think that they are in just and lawful possession of the Church also, and all its other gifts.” He does not say “that they will think they are in possession,” but “in just and lawful possession of the gifts of the Church.” But we say that we cannot allow that they are in just and lawful possession of baptism. That they are in possession of it we cannot deny, when we recognize the sacrament of the Lord in the words of the gospel. They have therefore lawful baptism, but they do not have it lawfully. For whosoever has it both in Catholic unity, and living worthily of it, both has lawful baptism and has it lawfully; but whosoever has it either within the Catholic Church itself, as chaff mixed with the wheat, or outside, as chaff carried away by the wind, has indeed lawful baptism, but not lawfully. For he has it as he uses it. But the man does not use it lawfully who uses it against the law,—which every one does, who, being baptized, yet leads an abandoned life, whether inside or without the Church

## CHAPTER 8

9. Wherefore, as the apostle said of the law, “The law is good, if a man use it lawfully,” so we may fairly say of baptism, Baptism is good, if a man use it lawfully. And as they who used the law unlawfully could not in that case cause that it should not be in itself good, or make it null and void, so any one who uses baptism unlawfully, either because he lives in heresy, or because he lives the worst of lives, yet cannot cause that the baptism should be otherwise than good, or altogether null and void. And so, when he is converted either to Catholic unity, or to a mode of living worthy of so great a sacrament, he begins to have not another and a lawful baptism, but that same baptism in a lawful manner. Nor does the remission of irrevocable sins follow on baptism, unless a man not only have lawful baptism, but have it lawfully; and yet it does not follow that if a man have it not lawfully, so that his sins are either not remitted, or, being remitted, are brought on

him again, therefore the sacrament of baptism should be in the baptized person either bad or null and void. For as Judas, to whom the Lord gave a morsel, gave a place within himself of the devil, not by receiving what was bad, but by receiving it badly, so each person, on receiving the sacrament of the Lord, does not cause that it is bad because he is bad himself, or that he has received nothing because he has not received it to salvation. For it was none the less the body of the Lord and the blood of the Lord, even in those to whom the apostle said, “He that eateth unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.” ^ Let the heretics therefore seek in the Catholic Church not what they have, but what they have not,—that is, the end of the commandment, without which many holy things may be possessed, but they cannot profit. “Now, the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” Let them therefore hasten to the unity and truth of the Catholic Church, not that they may have the sacrament of washing, if they have been already bathed in it, although in heresy, but that they may have it to their health

#### CHAPTER 9

10. Now we must see what is said of the baptism of John. For “we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that those who had already been baptized with the baptism of John were yet baptized by Paul,” simply because the baptism of John was not the baptism of Christ, but a baptism allowed by Christ to John, so as to be called especially John’s baptism; as the same John says, “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.” And that he might not possibly seem to receive this from God the Father in such wise as not to receive it from the Son, speaking presently of Christ Himself, he says, “Of His fullness have all we received.” But by the grace of a certain dispensation John received this, which was to last not for long, but only long enough to prepare for the Lord the way in which he must needs be the forerunner. And as our Lord was presently to enter on this way with all humility, and to lead those who humbly followed Him to perfection, as He washed the feet of His servants, so was He willing to be baptized with the baptism of a servant. For as He set Himself to minister to the feet of those whose guide He was Himself, so He submitted Himself to the gift of John which He Himself had given, that all might understand what sacrilegious

arrogance they would show in despising the baptism which they ought each of them to receive from the Lord, when the Lord Himself accepted what He Himself had bestowed upon a servant, that he might give it as his own; and that when John, than whom no greater had arisen among them that are born of women, bore such testimony to Christ, as to confess that he was not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoe, Christ might both, by receiving his baptism, be found to be the humblest among men, and, by taking away the place for the baptism of John, be believed to be the most high God, at once the teacher of humility and the giver of exaltation

11. For to none of the prophets, to no one at all in holy Scripture, do we read that it was granted to baptize in the water of repentance for the remission of sins, as it was granted to John; that, causing the hearts of the people to hang upon him through this marvellous grace, he might prepare in them the way for Him whom he declared to be so infinitely greater than himself. But the Lord Jesus Christ cleanses His Church by such a baptism that on receiving it no other is required; while John gave a first washing with such a baptism that on receiving it there was further need of the baptism of the Lord,—not that the first baptism should be repeated, but that the baptism of Christ, for whom he was preparing the way, might be further bestowed on those who had received the baptism of John. For if Christ's humility were not to be commended to our notice, neither would there be any need of the baptism of John; again, if the end were in John, after his baptism there would be no need of the baptism of Christ. But because "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," it was shown by John to whom men should go, and in whom, when they had reached Him, they should rest. The same, John, therefore, set forth both the exalted nature of the Lord, when he placed Him far before himself, and His humility, when he baptized Him as the lowest of the people. But if John had baptized Christ alone, he would be thought to have been the dispenser of a better baptism, in that with which Christ alone was baptized, than the baptism of Christ with which Christians are baptized; and again, if all ought to be baptized first with the baptism of John, and then with that of Christ, the baptism of Christ would deservedly seem to be lacking in fullness and perfection, as not sufficing for salvation. Wherefore the Lord was baptized with the baptism of John, that He might bend the proud necks of men to His

own health-giving baptism; and He was not alone baptized with it, lest He should show His own to be inferior to this, with which none but He Himself had deserved to be baptized; and He did not allow it to continue longer, lest the one baptism with which He baptizes might seem to need the other to precede it.

#### CHAPTER 10

12. I ask, therefore, if sins were remitted by the baptism of John, what more could the baptism of Christ confer on those whom the Apostle Paul desired to be baptized with the baptism of Christ after they had received the baptism of John? But if sins were not remitted by the baptism of John, were those men in the days of Cyprian better than John, of whom he says himself that they “used to seize on estates by treacherous frauds, and increase their gains by accumulated usuries,” through whose, administration of baptism the remission of sins was yet conferred? Or was it because they were contained within the unity of the Church? What then? Was John not contained within that unity, the friend of the Bridegroom, the preparer of the way of the Lord, the baptizer of the Lord Himself? Who will be mad enough to assert this? Wherefore, although my belief is that John so baptized with the water of repentance for the remission of sins, that those who were baptized by him received the expectation of the remission of their sins, the actual remission taking place in the baptism of the Lord,—just as the resurrection which is expected at the last day is fulfilled in hope in us, as the apostle says, that “He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;” and again, “For we are saved by hope;” or as again John himself, while he says, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, for the remission of your sins,” yet says, on seeing our Lord, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,”—nevertheless I am not disposed to contend vehemently against any one who maintains that sins were remitted even in the baptism of John, but that some fuller sanctification was conferred by the baptism of Christ on those whom Paul ordered to be baptized anew

#### CHAPTER 11

13. For we must look at the point which especially concerns the matter before us (whatever be the nature of the baptism of John, since it is clear that he belongs to the unity of Christ), viz., what is the reason for which it was right that men should be baptized again after receiving the baptism of the holy John, and why they ought not to be baptized again after receiving the baptism of the covetous bishops. For no one denies that in the Lord's field John was as wheat, bearing an hundred-fold, if that be the highest rate of increase; also no one doubts that covetousness, which is idolatry, is reckoned in the Lord's harvest among the chaff. Why then is a man baptized again after receiving baptism from the wheat, and not after receiving it from the chaff? If it was because he was better than John that Paul baptized after John, why did not also Cyprian baptize after his usurious colleagues, than whom he was better beyond all comparison? If it was because they were in unity with him that he did not baptize after such colleagues, neither ought Paul to have baptized after John, because they were joined together in the same unity. Can it be that defrauders and extortioners belong to the members of that one dove, and that he does not belong to it to whom the full power of the Lord Jesus Christ was shown by the appearance of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove? Truly he belongs most closely to it; but the others, who must be separated from it either by the occasion of some scandal, or by the winnowing at the last day, do not by any means belong to it, and yet baptism was repeated after John and not after them. What then is the cause, except that the baptism which Paul ordered them to receive was not the same as that which was given at the hands of John? And so in the same unity of the Church, the baptism of Christ cannot be repeated though it be given by an usurious minister; but those who receive the baptism of John, even from the hands of John Himself, ought to be afterwards baptized with the baptism of Christ

#### CHAPTER 12

14. Accordingly, I too might use the words of the blessed Cyprian to turn the hearts of those that hear me to the consideration of something truly marvellous, if I were to say "that John, who was accounted greater among the prophets,—he who was filled with divine grace while yet in his mother's womb; he who was upheld in the spirit and power of Elias; who

was not the adversary, but a forerunner and herald of the Lord: who not only foretold our Lord in words, but also showed Him to the sight; who baptized Christ Himself, through whom all others are baptized,”—he was not worthy to baptize in such wise that those who were baptized by him should not be baptized again after him; and shall no one think that a man should be baptized in the Church after he had been baptized by the covetous, by defrauders, by extortioners, by usurers? Is not the answer ready to this invidious question, Why do you think this unmeet, as though either John were dishonored, or the covetous man honored? But His baptism ought not to be repeated, of whom John says, “The same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” For whoever be the minister by whose hands it is given, it is His baptism of whom it was said, “The same is He which baptizeth.” But neither was the baptism of John himself repeated, when the Apostle Paul commanded those who had been baptized by him to be baptized in Christ. For what they had not received from the friend of the Bridegroom, this it was right that they should receive from the Bridegroom Himself, of whom that friend had said, “The same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”

#### CHAPTER 13

15. For the Lord Jesus might, if He had so thought fit, have given the power of His baptism to some one or more of His chief servants, whom He had already made His friends, such as those to whom He says, “Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends;” that, as Aaron was shown to be the priest by the rod that budded, so in His Church, when more and greater miracles are performed, the ministers of more excellent holiness, and the dispensers of His mysteries, might be made manifest by some sign, as those who alone ought to baptize. But if this had been done, then though the power of baptizing were given them by the Lord, yet it would necessarily be called their own baptism, as in the case of the baptism of John. And so Paul gives thanks to God that he baptized none of those men who, as though forgetting in whose name they had been baptized, were for dividing themselves into factions under the names of different individuals. For when baptism is as valid at the hands of a contemptible man as it was when given by an apostle, it is recognized as the baptism neither of this man nor of that, but of

Christ; as John bears witness that he learned, in the case of the Lord Himself, through the appearance of the dove. For in what other respect he said, "And I knew Him not," I cannot clearly see. For if he had not known Him in any sense, he could not have said to Him when He came to his baptism, "I have need to be baptized of Thee." What is it, therefore, that he says, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptizewith water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost?" The dove clearly descended on Him after He was baptized. But while He was yet coming to be baptized, John had said, "I have need to be baptized of Thee." He therefore already knew Him. What does he therefore mean by the words, "I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost," since this took place after He was baptized, unless it were that he knew Him in respect of certain attributes, and in respect of others knew Him not? He knew Him, indeed, as the Son of God, the Bridegroom, of whose fullness all should receive; but whereas of His fullness he himself had so received the power of baptizing that it should be called the baptism of John, he did not know whether He would so give it to others also, or whether He would have His own baptism in such wise, that at whosoever hands it was given, whether by a man that brought forth fruit a hundredfold, or sixtyfold, or thirtyfold, whether by the wheat or by the chaff, it should be known to be of Him alone; and this he learned through the Spirit descending like a dove, and abiding on Him

#### CHAPTER 14

16. Accordingly we find the apostles using the expressions, "My glorying," though it was certainly in the Lord; and "Mine office," and "My knowledge," and "My gospel," although it was confessedly bestowed and given by the Lord; but no one of them ever once said, "My baptism." For neither is the glorying of all of them equal, nor do they all minister with equal powers, nor are they all endowed with equal knowledge, and in preaching the gospel one works more forcibly than another, and so one may



be said to be more learned than another in the doctrine of salvation itself; but one cannot be said to be more or less baptized than another, whether he be baptized by a greater or a less worthy minister. So when “the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like;” if it be strange that it should be said, “Men were baptized after John, and are not baptized after heretics,” why is it not equally strange that it should be said, “Men were baptized after John, and are not baptized after the envious,” seeing that Cyprian himself bears witness in his epistle concerning envy and malignity that the covetous are of the party of the devil, and Cyprian himself makes it manifest from the words of the Apostle Paul, as we have shown above, that in the time of the apostles themselves there were envious persons in the Church of Christ among the very preachers of the name of Christ?

#### CHAPTER 15

17. That therefore the baptism of John was not the same as the baptism of Christ, has, I think, been shown with sufficient clearness; and therefore no argument can be drawn from it that baptism should be repeated after heretics because it was repeated after John: since John was not a heretic, and could have a baptism, which, though granted by Christ, was yet not the very baptism of Christ, seeing that he had the love of Christ; while a heretic can have at once the baptism of Christ and the perversity of the devil, as another within the Church may have at once the baptism of Christ and the envy of the devil

18. But it will be urged that baptism after a heretic is much more required, because John was not a heretic, and yet baptism was repeated after him. On this principle, a man may say, much more must we rebaptize after a drunkard, because John was sober, and yet baptism was repeated after him. And we shall have no answer to make to such a man, save that the baptism of Christ was given to those who were baptized by John, because they had it not; but where men have the baptism of Christ, no iniquity on their part can possibly effect that the baptism of Christ should fail to be in them.

19. It is not therefore true that “by baptizing first, the heretic obtains the right of baptism;” but because he did not baptize with his own baptism, and though he did not possess the right of baptizing, yet that which he gave is Christ’s, and he who received it is Christ’s. For many things are given wrongfully and yet they are not therefore said to be non-existent or not given at all. For neither does he who renounces the world in word only and not in deed receive baptism lawfully, and yet he does receive it. For both Cyprian records that there were such men in the Church in his day, and we ourselves experience and lament the fact.

20. But it is strange in what sense it can be said that “baptism and the Church cannot in any way be separated and detached from one another.” For if baptism remains inseparably in him who is baptized, how can it be that he can be separated from the Church, and baptism cannot? But it is clear that baptism does remain inseparably in the baptized person; because into whatever depth of evil, and into whatever fearful whirlpool of sin the baptized person may fall, even to the ruin of apostasy, he yet is not bereft of his baptism. And therefore, if through repentance he returns, it is not given again, because it is judged that he could not have been bereft of it. But who can ever doubt that a baptized person can be separated from the Church? For hence all the heresies have proceeded which deceive by the use of Christian terms.

#### CHAPTER 16

Wherefore, since it is manifest that the baptism remains in the baptized person when he is separated from the Church, the baptism which is in him is certainly separated with him. And therefore not all who retain the baptism retain the Church, just as not all who retain the Church retain eternal life. Or if we say that only those retain the Church who observe the commandments of God, we at once concede that there are many who retain baptism, and do not retain the Church

21. Therefore the heretic is not “the first to seize baptism,” since he has received it from the Church. Nor, though he seceded, could baptism have been lost by him whom we assert no longer to retain the Church, and yet allow to retain baptism. Nor does any one “yield his birthright, and give it

to a heretic,” because he says that he took away with him what he could not give lawfully, but what would yet be according to law when given; or that he no longer has lawfully what yet is in accordance with law in his possession. But the birthright rests only in a holy conversation and good life, to which all belong of whom that bride consists as her members which has no spot or wrinkle, or that dove that groans amid the wickedness of the many crows,—unless it be that, while Esau lost his birthright from his lust after a mess of pottage, we are yet to hold that it is retained by defrauders, robbers, usurers, envious persons, drunkards and the like, over whose existence in the Church of his time Cyprian groaned in his epistles. Wherefore, either it is not the same thing to retain the Church and to retain the birthright in divine things, or, if every one who retains the Church also retains the birthright, then all those wicked ones do not retain the Church who yet both seem and are allowed by every one of us to give baptism within the Church; for no one, save the man who is wholly ignorant of sacred things, would say that they retain the birthright in sacred things.

#### CHAPTER 17

22. But, having considered and handled all these points, we have now come to that peaceful utterance of Cyprian at the end of the epistle, with which I am never sated, though I read and re-read it again and again,—so great is the pleasantness of brotherly love which breathes forth from it, so great the sweetness of charity in which it abounds. “These things,” he says, “we have written unto you, dearest brother, shortly, according to our poor ability, prescribing to or prejudging no one, lest each bishop should not do what he thinks right, in the free exercise of his own will. We, so far as in us lies, do not contend on the subject of heretics with our colleagues and fellow-bishops, with whom we maintain concord and peace in the Lord; especially as the apostle also says, If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.’ We observe patiently and gently charity of spirit, the honor of our brotherhood, the bond of faith, the harmony of the priesthood. For this reason also, to the best of our poor ability, by the permission and the inspiration of God we have written this treatise on The Good of Patience,’ which we have sent to you in consideration of our mutual love.”

23. There are many things to be considered in these words, wherein the brightness of Christian charity shines forth in this man, who “loved the beauty of the Lord’s house, and the place of the tabernacle of His habitation.” First, that he did not conceal what he felt; then, that he set it forth so gently and peacefully, in that he maintained the peace of the Church with those who thought otherwise, because he understood how great healthfulness was bound up in the bond of peace, loving it so much, and maintaining it with sobriety, seeing and feeling that even men who think differently may entertain their several sentiments with saving charity. For he would not say that he could maintain divine concord or the peace of the Lord with evil men; for the good man can observe peace towards wicked men, but he cannot be united with them in the peace which they have not. Lastly, that prescribing to no one, and prejudging no one, lest each bishop should not do what he thinks right in the free exercise of his own will, he has left for us also, whatsoever we may be, a place for treating peacefully of those things with him. For he is present, not only in his letters, but by that very charity which existed in so extraordinary a degree in him, and which can never die. Longing, therefore, with the aid of his prayers, to cling to and be in union with him, if I be not hindered by the unmeetness of my sins, I will learn if I can through his letters with how great peace and comfort the Lord administered His Church through him; and, putting on the bowels of humility through the moving influence of his discourse, if, in common with the Church at large, I entertain any doctrine more true than his, I will not prefer my heart to his, even in the point in which he, though holding different views, was yet not severed from the Church throughout the world. For in that, when that question was yet undecided for want of full discussion, though his sentiments differed from those of many of his colleagues, yet he observed so great moderation, that he would not mutilate the sacred fellowship of the Church of God by any stain of schism, a greater strength of excellence appeared in him than would have been shown if, without that virtue, he had held views on every point not only true, but coinciding with their own. Nor should I be acting as he would wish, if I were to pretend to prefer his talent and his fluency of discourse and copiousness of learning to the holy Council of all nations, whereat he was assuredly present through the unity of his spirit, especially as he is now placed in such full light of truth as to see with perfect certainty what he was

here seeking in the spirit of perfect peace. For out of that rich abundance he smiles at all that here seems eloquence in us, as though it were the first essay of infancy; there he sees by what rule of piety he acted here, that nothing should be dearer in the Church to him than unity. There, too, with unspeakable delight he beholds with what prescient and most merciful providence the Lord, that He might heal our swellings, “chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise,” and, in the ordering of the members of His Church, placed all things in such a healthful way, that men should not say that they were chosen to the help of the gospel for their own talent or learning, of whose source they yet were ignorant, and so be puffed up with deadly pride. Oh, how Cyprian rejoices! With how much more perfect calmness does he behold how greatly it conduces to the health of the human race, that in the writings even of Christian and pious orators there should be found what merits blame, and in the writings of the fishermen there should nothing of the sort be found! And so I, being fully assured of this joy of that holy soul, neither in any way venture to think or say that my writings are free from every kind of error, nor, in opposing that opinion of his, wherein it seemed to him that those who came from among heretics were to be received otherwise than either they had been in former days, as he himself bears witness, or are now received, as is the reasonable custom, confirmed by a plenary Council of the whole Christian world, do I set against him my own view, but that of the holy Catholic Church, which he so loved and loves, in which he brought forth such abundant fruit with tolerance, whose entirety he himself was not, but in whose entirety he remained; whose root he never left, but, though he already brought forth fruit from its root, he was purged by the heavenly Husbandman that he should bring forth more fruit; for whose peace and safety, that the wheat might not be rooted out together with the tares, he both reproveth with the freedom of truth, and endured with the grace of charity, so many evils on the part of men who were placed in unity with himself.

#### CHAPTER 18

24. Whence Cyprian himself again admonishes us with the greatest fullness, that many who were dead in their trespasses and sins, although they did not belong to the body of Christ, and the members of that innocent and

guileless dove (so that if she alone baptized, they certainly could not baptize), yet to all appearance seemed both to be baptized and to baptize within the Church. And among them, however dead they are, their baptism nevertheless lives, which is not dead, and death shall have no more dominion over it. Since, therefore, there be dead men within the Church, nor are they concealed, for else Cyprian would not have spoken of them so much, who either do not belong at all to that living dove, or at least do not as yet belong to her; and since there be dead men without, who yet more clearly do not belong to her at all, or not as yet; and since it is true that “another man cannot be quickened by one who himself liveth not,”—it is therefore clear that those who within are baptized by such persons, if they approach the sacrament with true conversion of heart, are quickened by Him whose baptism it is. But if they renounce the world in word and not in deed, as Cyprian declares to be the case with some who are within, it is then manifest that they are not themselves quickened unless they be converted, and yet that they have true baptism even though they be not converted. Whence also it is likewise clear that those who are dead without, although they neither “live themselves, nor quicken others,” yet have the living baptism, which would profit them unto life so soon as they should be converted unto peace

#### CHAPTER 19

25. Wherefore, as regards those who received the persons who came from heresy in the same baptism of Christ with which they had been baptized outside the Church, and said “that they followed ancient custom,” as indeed the Church now receives such, it is in vain urged against them “that among the ancients there were as yet only the first beginning of heresy and schisms, so that those were involved in them who were seceders from the Church, and had originally been baptized within the Church, so that it was not necessary that they should be baptized again when they returned and did penance.” For so soon as each several heresy existed, and departed from the communion of the Catholic Church, it was possible that, I will not even say the next day, but even on that very day, its votaries might have baptized some who flocked to them. And therefore if this was the old custom, that they should be so received into the Church (as could not be denied even by

those who maintained the contrary part in the discussion), there can be no doubt in the mind of any one who pays careful attention to the matter, that those also were so received who had been baptized without in heresy

26. But I cannot see what show of reason there is in this, that the name of “erring sheep” should be denied to one whose lot it has been that, while seeking the salvation which is in Christ, he has fallen into the error of heretics, and been baptized in their body; while he is held to have become a sheep already within the body of the Catholic Church herself, who has renounced the world in words and not in deeds, and has received baptism in such falseness of heart as this. Or if such an one also does not become a sheep unless after turning to God with a true heart, then, as he is not baptized at the time when he becomes a sheep, if he had been already baptized, but was not yet a sheep; so he too, who comes from the heretics that he may become a sheep, is not then to be baptized if he had been already baptized with the same baptism, though he was not yet a sheep. Wherefore, since even all the bad that are within—the covetous, the envious, the drunkards, and those that live contrary to the discipline of Christ—may be deservedly called liars, and in darkness, and dead, and antichrists, do they yet therefore not baptize, on the ground that “there can be nothing common between truth and falsehood, between light and darkness, between death and immortality, between Antichrist and Christ?”

27. He makes an assumption, then, not “of mere custom,” but “of the reason of truth itself,” when he says that the sacrament of God cannot be turned to error by the error of any men, since it is declared to exist even in those who have erred. Assuredly the Apostle John says most plainly, “He that hateth his brother is in darkness even until now;” and again, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer;” and why, therefore, do they baptize those within the Church whom Cyprian himself declares to be in the envy of malice?

## CHAPTER 20

How does a murderer cleanse and sanctify the water? How can darkness bless the oil? But if God is present in His sacraments to confirm His words by whomsoever the sacraments may be administered, then both the

sacraments of God are everywhere valid, and evil men whom they profit not are everywhere perverse

28. But what kind of argument is this, that “a heretic must be considered not to have baptism, because he has not the Church?” And it must be acknowledged that “when he is baptized, he is questioned about the Church.” Just as though the same question about the Church were not put in baptism to him who within the Church renounces the world in word and not in deed. As therefore his false answer does not prevent what he receives from being baptism, so also the false reply of the other about the holy Church does not prevent what he receives from being baptism; and as the former, if he afterwards fulfill with truth what he promised in falsehood, does not receive a second baptism, but only an amended life, so also in the case of the latter, if he come afterwards to the Church about which he gave a false answer to the question put to him, thinking that he had it when he had it not, the Church herself which he did not possess is given him, but what he had received is not repeated. But I cannot tell why it should be, that while God can “sanctify the oil” in answer to the words which proceed out of the mouth of a murderer, “He yet cannot sanctify it on the altar reared by a heretic,” unless it be that He who is not hindered by the false conversion of the heart of man within the Church is hindered by the false erection of some wood without from deigning to be present in His sacraments, though no falseness on the part of men can hinder Him. If, therefore, what is said in the gospel, that “God heareth not sinners,” extends so far that the sacraments cannot be celebrated by a sinner, how then does He hear a murderer praying, either over the water of baptism, or over the oil, or over the eucharist, or over the heads of those on whom his hand is laid? All which things are nevertheless done, and are valid, even at the hands of murderers, that is, at the hands of those who hate their brethren, even within, in the Church itself. Since “no one can give what he does not possess himself,” how does a murderer give the Holy Spirit? And yet such an one even baptizeth within the Church. It is God, therefore, that gives the Holy Spirit even when a man of this kind is baptizing.



29. But as to what he says, that “he who comes to the Church is to be baptized and renewed, that within he may be hallowed through the holy,” what will he do, if within also he meets with those who are not holy? Or can it be that the murderer is holy? And if the reason for his being baptized in the Church is that “he should put off this very thing also that he, being a man that sought to come to God, fell, through the deceit of error, on one profane,” where is he afterwards to put off this, that he may chance, while seeking a man of God within the Church itself, to have fallen, through the deceit of error, on a murderer? If “there cannot be in a man something that is void and something that is valid,” why is it possible that in a murderer the sacrament should be holy and his heart unholy? If “whosoever cannot give the Holy Spirit cannot baptize,” why does the murderer baptize within the Church? Or how has the murderer the Holy Spirit, when every one that has the Holy Spirit is filled with light, but “he who hates his brother is still in darkness?” If because “there is one baptism, and one Spirit,” therefore they cannot have the one baptism who have not the one Spirit, why do the innocent man and the murderer within the Church have the one baptism and not have the one Spirit? So therefore the heretic and the Catholic may have the one baptism, and yet not have the one Church, as in the Catholic Church the innocent man and the murderer may have the one baptism, though they have not the one Spirit; for as there is one baptism, so there is one Spirit and one Church. And so the result is, that in each person we must acknowledge what he already has, and to each person we must give what he has not. If “nothing can be confirmed and ratified with God which has been done by those whom God calls His enemies and foes,” why is the baptism confirmed which is given by murderers? Are we not to call murderers the enemies and foes of the Lord? But “he that hateth his brother is a murderer.” How then did they baptize who hated Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ, and thereby hated Jesus Himself, since He Himself said to Saul, “Why persecutest thou me?” when he was persecuting His servants, and since at the last He Himself shall say, “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these that are mine, ye did it not to me?” Wherefore all who go out from us are not of us, but not all who are with us are of us; just as when men thresh, all that flies from the threshing-floor is shown not to be corn, but not all that remains there is therefore corn. And so John too says, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt

have continued with us.” Wherefore God gives the sacrament of grace even through the hands of wicked men, but the grace itself only by Himself or through His saints. And therefore He gives remission of sins either of Himself, or through the members of that dove to whom He says, “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” But since no one can doubt that baptism, which is the sacrament of the remission of sins, is possessed even by murderers, who are yet in darkness because the hatred of their brethren is not excluded from their hearts, therefore either no remission of sins is given to them if their baptism is accompanied by no change of heart for the better, or if the sins are remitted, they at once return on them again. And we learn that the baptism is holy in itself, because it is of God; and whether it be given or whether it be received by men of such like character, it cannot be polluted by any perversity of theirs, either within, or yet outside the Church

## CHAPTER 22

30. Accordingly we agree with Cyprian that “heretics cannot give remission of sins;” but we maintain that they can give baptism,—which indeed in them, both when they give and when they receive it, is profitable only to their destruction, as misusing so great a gift of God; just as also the malicious and envious, whom Cyprian himself acknowledges to be within the Church, cannot give remission of sins, while we all confess that they can give baptism. For if it was said of those who have sinned against us, “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses,” how much more impossible is it that their sins should be forgiven who hate the brethren by whom they are loved, and are baptized in that very hatred; and yet when they are brought to the right way, baptism is not given them anew, but that very pardon which they did not then deserve is granted them in their true conversion? And so even what Cyprian wrote to Quintus, and what, in conjunction with his colleagues Liberalis, Caldonius, Junius, and the rest, he wrote to Saturninus, Maximus, and others, is all found, on due consideration, to be in no wise meet to be preferred as against the agreement of the whole Catholic Church, of which they rejoiced that they were members, and from which they neither cut themselves away nor allowed others to be cut away who held a contrary

opinion, until at length, by the will of the Lord, it was made manifest, by a plenary Council many years afterwards, what was the more perfect way, and that not by the institution of any novelty, but by confirming what was old

#### CHAPTER 23

31. Cyprian writes also to Pompeius about this selfsame matter, and clearly shows in that letter that Stephen, who, as we learn, was then bishop of the Roman Church, not only did not agree with him upon the points before us, but even wrote and taught the opposite views. But Stephen certainly did not “communicate with heretics,” merely because he did not dare to impugn the baptism of Christ, which he knew remained perfect in the midst of their perversity. For if none have baptism who entertain false views about God, it has been proved sufficiently, in my opinion, that this may happen even within the Church. “The apostles,” indeed, “gave no injunctions on the point;” but the custom, which is opposed to Cyprian, may be supposed to have had its origin in apostolic tradition, just as there are many things which are observed by the whole Church, and therefore are fairly held to have been enjoined by the apostles, which yet are not mentioned in their writings

32. But it will be urged that it is written of heretics that “they are condemned of themselves.” What then? are they not also condemned of themselves to whom it was said, “For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself?” But to these the apostle says, “Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?” and so forth. And such truly were they who, being bishops and established in Catholic unity with Cyprian himself, used to plunder estates by treacherous frauds, preaching all the time to the people the words of the apostle, who says, “Nor shall extortioners inherit the kingdom of God.”

33. Wherefore I will do no more than run shortly through the other sentiments founded on the same rules, which are in the aforesaid letter written to Pompeius. By what authority of holy Scripture is it shown that “it is against the commandment of God that persons coming from the society of heretics, if they have already there received the baptism of Christ, are not

baptized again?” But it is clearly shown that many pretended Christians, though they are not joined in the same bond of charity with the saints, without which anything holy that they may have been able to possess is of no profit to them, yet have baptism in common with the saints, as has been already sufficiently proved with the greatest fullness. He says “that the Church, and the Spirit, and baptism, are mutually incapable of separation from each other, and therefore” he wishes that “those who are separated from the Church and the Holy Spirit should be understood to be separated also from baptism.” But if this is the case, then when any one has received baptism in the Catholic Church, it remains so long in him as he himself remains in the Church, which is not so. For it is not restored to him when he returns, just because he did not lose it when he seceded. But as the disaffected sons have not the Holy Spirit in the same manner as the beloved sons, and yet they have baptism; so heretics also have not the Church as Catholics have, and yet they have baptism. “For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit,” and yet baptism will not flee from it. And so, as baptism can continue in one from whom the Holy Spirit withdraws Himself, so can baptism continue where the Church is not. But if “the laying on of hands” were not “applied to one coming from heresy,” he would be as it were judged to be wholly blameless; but for the uniting of love, which is the greatest gift of the Holy Spirit, without which any other holy thing that there may be in a man is profitless to his salvation, hands are laid on heretics when they are brought to a knowledge of the truth.

#### CHAPTER 24

34. I remember that I have already discussed at sufficient length the question of “the temple of God,” and how this saying is to be taken, “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” For neither are the covetous the temple of God, since it is written, “What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” And Cyprian has adduced the testimony of Paul to the fact that covetousness is idolatry. But men put on Christ, sometimes so far as to receive the sacrament, sometimes so much further as to receive holiness of life. And the first of these is common to good and bad alike; the second, peculiar to the good and pious. Wherefore, if “baptism cannot be without the Spirit,” then heretics have the Spirit also,

—but to destruction, not to salvation, just as was the case with Saul. For in the Holy Spirit devils are cast out through the name of Christ, which even he was able to do who was without the Church, which called forth a suggestion from the disciples to their Lord. Just as the covetous have the Holy Spirit, who yet are not the temple of God. For “what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” If therefore the covetous have not the Spirit of God, and yet have baptism, it is possible for baptism to exist without the Spirit of God

35. If therefore heresy is rendered “unable to engender sons to God through Christ, because it is not the bride of Christ,” neither can that crowd of evil men established within the Church, since it is also not the bride of Christ; for the bride of Christ is described as being without spot or wrinkle. Therefore either not all baptized persons are the sons of God, or even that which is not the bride can engender the sons of God. But as it is asked whether “he is spiritually born who has received the baptism of Christ in the midst of heretics,” so it may be asked whether he is spiritually born who has received the baptism of Christ in the Catholic Church, without being turned to God in a true heart, of whom it cannot be said that he has not received baptism.

## CHAPTER 25

36. I am unwilling to go on to handle again what Cyprian poured forth with signs of irritation against Stephen, as it is, moreover, quite unnecessary. For they are but the selfsame arguments which have already been sufficiently discussed; and it is better to pass over those points which involved the danger of baneful dissension. But Stephen thought that we should even hold aloof from those who endeavored to destroy the primitive custom in the matter of receiving heretics; whereas Cyprian, moved by the difficulty of the question itself, and being most largely endowed with the holy bowels of Christian charity, thought that we ought to remain at unity with those who differed in opinion from ourselves. Therefore, although he was not without excitement, though of a truly brotherly kind, in his indignation, yet the peace of Christ prevailed in their hearts, that in such a dispute no evil of schism should arise between them. But it was not found that “hence grew more abundant heresies and schisms,” because what is of Christ in them is

approved, and what is of themselves is condemned; for all the more those who hold this law of rebaptizing were cut into smaller fragments

#### CHAPTER 26

37. To go on to what he says, “that a bishop should be teachable,”“ adding, “But he is teachable who is gentle and meek to learn; for a bishop ought not only to teach, but to learn as well, since he is indeed the better teacher who daily grows and advances by learning better things;”—in these words assuredly the holy man, endowed with pious charity, sufficiently points out that we should not hesitate to read his letters in such a sense, that we should feel no difficulty if the Church should afterwards confirm what had been discovered by further and longer discussions; because, as there were many things which the learned Cyprian might teach, so there was still something which the teachable Cyprian might learn. But the admonition that he gives us, “that we should go back to the fountain, that is, to apostolic tradition, and thence turn the channel of truth to our times,” is most excellent, and should be followed without hesitation. It is handed down to us, therefore, as he himself records, by the apostles, that there is “one God, and one Christ, and one hope, and one faith, and one Church, and one baptism.” Since then we find that in the times of the apostles themselves there were some who had not the one hope, but had the one baptism, the truth is so brought down to us from the fountain itself, that it is clear to us that it is possible that though there is one Church, as there is one hope, and one baptism, they may yet have the one baptism who have not the one Church; just as even in those early times it was possible that men should have the one baptism who had not the one hope. For how had they one hope with the holy and the just, who used to say, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,” asserting that there was no resurrection of the dead? And yet they were among the very men to whom the same apostle says, “Was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” For he writes most manifestly to them, saying, “How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?”

#### CHAPTER 27

38. And in that the Church is thus described in the Song of Songs, “A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, a well of living water; thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits;” I dare not understand this save of the holy and just,—not of the covetous, and defrauders, and robbers, and usurers, and drunkards, and the envious, of whom we yet both learn most fully from Cyprian’s letters, as I have often shown, and teach ourselves, that they had baptism in common with the just, in common with whom they certainly had not Christian charity. For I would that some one would tell me how they “crept into the garden enclosed and the fountain sealed,” of whom Cyprian bears witness that they renounced the world in word and not in deed, and that yet they were within the Church. For if they both are themselves there, and are themselves the bride of Christ, can she then be as she is described “without spot or wrinkle,” and is the fair dove defiled with such a portion of her members? Are these the thorns among which she is a lily, as it is said in the same Song? So far therefore, as the lily extends, so far does “the garden enclosed and the fountain sealed,” namely, through all those just persons who are Jews inwardly in the circumcision of the heart (for “the king’s daughter is all glorious within” ), in whom is the fixed number of the saints predestined before the foundation of the world. But that multitude of thorns, whether in secret or in open separation, is pressing on it from without, above number. “If I would declare them,” it is said, “and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.” The number, therefore, of the just persons, “who are the called according to His purpose,” of whom it is said, “The Lord knoweth them that are His,” is itself “the garden enclosed, the fountain sealed, a well of living water, the orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits.” Of this number some live according to the Spirit, and enter on the excellent way of charity; and when they “restore a man that is overtaken in a fault in the spirit of meekness, they consider themselves, lest they also be tempted.” And when it happens that they also are themselves overtaken, the affection of charity is but a little checked, and not extinguished; and again rising up and being kindled afresh, it is restored to its former course. For they know how to say, “My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto Thy word.” But when “in anything they be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto them,” if they abide in the burning flame of charity, and do not break the bond of

peace. But some who are yet carnal, and full of fleshly appetites, are instant in working out their progress; and that they may become fit for heavenly food, they are nourished with the milk of the holy mysteries, they avoid in the fear of God whatever is manifestly corrupt even in the opinion of the world, and they strive most watchfully that they may be less and less delighted with worldly and temporal matters. They observe most constantly the rule of faith which has been sought out with diligence; and if in aught they stray from it, they submit to speedy correction under Catholic authority, although, in Cyprian's words, they be tossed about, by reason of their fleshly appetite, with the various conflicts of phantasies. There are some also who as yet live wickedly, or even lie in heresies or the superstitions of the Gentiles, and yet even then "the Lord knoweth them that are His." For, in that unspeakable foreknowledge of God, many who seem to be without are in reality within, and many who seem to be within yet really are without. Of all those, therefore, who, if I may so say, are inwardly and secretly within, is that "enclosed garden" composed, "the fountain sealed, a well of living water, the orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits." The divinely imparted gifts of these are partly peculiar to themselves, as in this world the charity that never faileth, and in the world to come eternal life; partly they are common with evil and perverse men, as all the other things in which consist the holy mysteries

## CHAPTER 28

39. Hence, therefore, we have now set before us an easier and more simple consideration of that ark of which Noah was the builder and pilot. For Peter says that in the ark of Noah, "few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God)." Wherefore, if those appear to men to be baptized in Catholic unity who renounce the world in words only and not in deeds, how do they belong to the mystery of this ark in whom there is not the answer of a good conscience? Or how are they saved by water, who, making a bad use of holy baptism, though they seem to be within, yet persevere to the end of their days in a wicked and abandoned course of life? Or how can they fail to be saved by water, of whom Cyprian himself records that they were in time



past simply admitted to the Church with the baptism which they had received in heresy? For the same unity of the ark saved them, in which no one has been saved except by water. For Cyprian himself says, “The Lord is able of His mercy to grant pardon, and not to sever from the gifts of His Church those who, being in all simplicity admitted to the Church, have fallen asleep within her pale.” If not by water, how in the ark? If not in the ark, how in the Church? But if in the Church, certainly in the ark; and if in the ark, certainly by water. It is therefore possible that some who have been baptized without may be considered, through the foreknowledge of God, to have been really baptized within, because within the water begins to be profitable to them unto salvation; nor can they be said to have been otherwise saved in the ark except by water. And again, some who seemed to have been baptized within may be considered, through the same foreknowledge of God, more truly to have been baptized without, since, by making a bad use of baptism, they die by water, which then happened to no one who was not outside the ark. Certainly it is clear that, when we speak of within and without in relation to the Church, it is the position of the heart that we must consider, not that of the body, since all who are within in heart are saved in the unity of the ark through the same water, through which all who are in heart without, whether they are also in body without or not, die as enemies of unity. As therefore it was not another but the same water that saved those who were placed within the ark, and destroyed those who were left without the ark, so it is not by different baptisms, but by the same, that good Catholics are saved, and bad Catholics or heretics perish. But what the most blessed Cyprian thinks of the Catholic Church, and how the heretics are utterly crushed by his authority; notwithstanding the much I have already said, I have yet determined to set forth by itself, if God will, with somewhat greater fullness and perspicuity, so soon as I shall have first said about his Council what I think is due from me, which, in God’s will, I shall attempt in the following book

# Book VI

In which is considered the Council of Carthage, held under the authority and presidency of Cyprian, to determine the question of the baptism of heretics.

## CHAPTER 1

1. It might perhaps have been sufficient, that after the reasons have been so often repeated, and considered, and discussed with such variety of treatment, supplemented too, with the addition of proofs from holy Scripture, and the concurrent testimony of so many passages from Cyprian himself, even those who are slow of heart should thus understand, as I believe they do, that the baptism of Christ cannot be rendered void by any perversity on the part of man, whether in administering or receiving it. And when we find that in those times, when the point in question was decided in a manner contrary to ancient custom, after discussions carried on without violation of saving charity and unity, it appeared to some even eminent men who were bishops of Christ, among whom the blessed Cyprian was specially conspicuous, that the baptism of Christ could not exist among heretics or schismatics, this simply arose from their not distinguishing the sacrament from the effect or use of the sacrament; and because its effect and use were not found among heretics in freeing them from their sins and setting their hearts right, the sacrament itself was also thought to be wanting among them. But if we turn our eyes to the multitude of chaff within the Church, since these also who are perverse and lead an abandoned life in unity itself appear to have no power either of giving or retaining remission of sins, seeing that it is not to the wicked but the good sons that it was said, “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained,” yet that such persons both have, and give, and receive the sacrament of baptism, was sufficiently manifest to the

pastors of the Catholic Church dispersed over the whole world, through whom the original custom was afterwards confirmed by the authority of a plenary Council; so that even the sheep which was straying outside, and had received the mark of the Lord from false plunderers outside, if it seek the salvation of Christian unity, is purified from error, is freed from captivity, is healed of its wound, and yet the mark of the Lord is recognized rather than rejected in it; since the mark itself is often impressed both by wolves and on wolves, who seem indeed to be within the fold, but yet are proved by the fruits of their conduct, in which they persevere even to the end, not to belong to that sheep which is one in many; because, according to the foreknowledge of God, as many sheep wander outside, so many wolves lurk treacherously within, among whom the Lord yet knoweth them that are His, which hear only the voice of the Shepherd, even when He calls by the voice of men like the Pharisees, of whom it was said, "Whatsoever they bid you observe that observe and do."

2. For as the spiritual man, keeping "the end of the commandment," that is, "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," can see some things less clearly out of a body which is yet "corruptible and presseth down the soul," and is liable to be otherwise minded in some things which God will reveal to him in His own good time if he abide in the same charity, so in a carnal and perverse man something good and useful may be found, which has its origin not in the man himself, but in some other source. For as in the fruitful branch there is found something which must be purged that it may bring forth more fruit, so also a grape is often found to hang on a cane that is barren and dry or fettered. And so, as it is foolish to love the portions which require purging in the fruitful branch, while he acts wisely who does not reject the sweet fruit wherever it may hang, so, if any one cuts himself off from unity by rebaptizing, simply because it seemed to Cyprian that one ought to baptize again those who came from the heretics, such a man turns aside from what merits praise in that great man, and follows what requires correction, and does not even attain to the very thing he follows after. For Cyprian, while grievously abhorring, in his zeal for God, all those who severed themselves from unity, thought that thereby they were separated from baptism itself; while these men, thinking it at most a slight offense that they themselves are

severed from the unity of Christ, even maintain that His baptism is not in that unity, but issued forth with them. Therefore they are so far from the fruitfulness of Cyprian, as not even to be equal to the parts in him which needed purging.

## CHAPTER 2

3. Again, if any one not having charity, and walking in the abandoned paths of a most wicked life, seems to be within while he really is without, and at the same time does not seek for the repetition of baptism even in the case of heretics, it in no wise helps his barrenness, because he is not rendered fruitful with his own fruit, but laden with that of others. But it is possible that some one may flourish in the root of charity, and may be most rightly minded in the point in which Cyprian was otherwise minded, and yet there may be more that is fruitful in Cyprian than in him, more that requires purging in him than in Cyprian. Not only, therefore, do we not compare bad Catholics with the blessed Cyprian, but even good Catholics we do not hastily pronounce to be on an equality with him whom our pious mother Church counts among the few rare men of surpassing excellence and grace, although these others may recognize the baptism of Christ even among heretics, while he thought otherwise; so that, by the instance of Cyprian, who saw one point less clearly, and yet remained most firm in the unity of the Church, it might be shown more clearly to heretics what a sacrilegious crime it was to break the bond of peace. For neither were the blind Pharisees, although they sometimes enjoined what was right to be done, to be compared to the Apostle Peter, though he at times enjoined what was not right. But not only is their dryness not to be compared to his greenness, but even the fruit of others may not be deemed equal to his fertility. For no one now compels the Gentiles to judaize, and yet no one now in the Church, however great his progress in goodness, may be compared with the apostleship of Peter. Wherefore, while rendering due reverence, and paying, so far as I can, the fitting honor to the peaceful bishop and glorious martyr Cyprian, I yet venture to say that his view concerning the baptism of schismatics and heretics was contrary to that which was afterwards brought to light by a decision, not of mine, but of the whole Church, confirmed and strengthened by the authority of a plenary Council: just as, while paying the

reverence he deserves to Peter, the first of the apostles and most eminent of martyrs, I yet venture to say that he did not do right in compelling the Gentiles to judaize; for this also, I say, not of my own teaching, but according to the wholesome doctrine of the Apostle Paul, retained and preserved through out the whole Church

4. Therefore, in discussing the opinion of Cyprian, though myself of far inferior merit to Cyprian, I say that good and bad alike can have, can give, can receive the sacrament of baptism,—the good, indeed, to their health and profit; the bad to their destruction and ruin,—while the sacrament itself is of equal perfectness in both of them; and that it is of no consequence to its equal perfectness in all, how much worse the man may be that has it among the bad, just as it makes no difference how much better he may be that has it among the good. And accordingly it makes no difference either how much worse he may be that confers it, as it makes no difference how much better he may be; and so it makes no difference how much worse he may be that receives it, as it makes no difference how much better he may be. For the sacrament is equally holy, in virtue of its own excellence, both in those who are unequally just, and in those who are unequally unjust.

### CHAPTER 3

5. But I think that we have sufficiently shown, both from the canon of Scripture, and from the letters of Cyprian himself, that bad men, while by no means converted to a better mind, can have, and confer, and receive baptism, of whom it is most clear that they do not belong to the holy Church of God, though they seem to be within it, inasmuch as they are covetous, robbers, usurers, envious, evil thinkers, and the like; while she is one dove, modest and chaste, a bride without spot or wrinkle, a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed, an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits, with all similar properties which are attributed to her; and all this can only be understood to be in the good, and holy, and just,—following, that is, not only the operations of the gifts of God, which are common to good and bad alike, but also the inner bond of charity conspicuous in those who have the Holy Spirit, to whom the Lord says, “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

#### CHAPTER 4

6. And so it is clear that no good ground is shown herein why the bad man, who has baptism, may not also confer it; and as he has it to destruction, so he may also confer it to destruction,—not because this is the character of the thing conferred, nor of the person conferring, but because it is the character of him on whom it is conferred. For when a bad man confers it on a good man, that is, on one in the bond of unity, converted with a true conversion, the wickedness of him who confers it makes no severance between the good sacrament which is conferred, and the good member of the Church on whom it is conferred. And when his sins are forgiven him on his true conversion to God, they are forgiven by those to whom he is united by his true conversion. For the same Spirit forgives them, which is given to all the saints that cling to one another in love, whether they know one another in the body or not. Similarly when a man's sins are retained, they are assuredly retained by those from whom he, in whom they are retained, separates himself by dissimilarity of life, and by the turning away of a corrupt heart, whether they know him in the body or not

#### CHAPTER 5

7. Wherefore all bad men are separated in the spirit from the good; but if they are separated in the body also by a manifest dissension, they are made yet worse. But, as it has been said, it makes no difference to the holiness of baptism how much worse the man may be that has it, or how much worse he that confers it: yet he that is separated may confer it, as he that is separated may have it; but as he has it to destruction, so he may confer it to destruction. But he on whom he confers it may receive it to his soul's health, if he, on his part, receive it not in separation; as it has happened to many that, in a catholic spirit, and with heart not alienated from the unity of peace, they have, under some pressure of impending death, turned hastily to some heretic and received from him the baptism of Christ without any share in his perversity, so that, whether dying or restored to life, they by no means remain in communion with those to whom they never passed in heart. But if the recipient himself has received the baptism in separation, he receives it so much the more to his destruction, in proportion to the greatness of the good which he has not received well; and it tends the more to his

destruction in his separation, as it would avail the more to the salvation of one in unity. And so, if, reforming himself from his perverseness and turning from his separation, he should come to the Catholic peace, his sins are remitted through the bond of peace and the same baptism under which his sins were retained through the sacrilege of separation, because that is always holy both in the just and the unjust, which is neither increased by the righteousness nor diminished by the unrighteousness of any man

8. This being the case, what bearing has it on so clear a truth, that many of his fellow-bishops agreed with Cyprian in that opinion, and advanced their own several opinions on the same side, except that his charity towards the unity of Christ might become more and more conspicuous? For if he had been the only one to hold that opinion, with no one to agree with him, he might have been thought, in remaining, to have shrunk from the sin of schism, because he found no companions in his error; but when so many agreed with him, he showed, by remaining in unity with the rest who thought differently from him, that he preserved the most sacred bond of universal catholicity, not from any fear of isolation, but from the love of peace. Wherefore it might indeed seem now to be superfluous to consider the several opinions of the other bishops also in that Council; but since those who are slow in heart think that no answer has been made at all, if to any passage in any discourse the answer which might be brought to bear on the spot be given not there but somewhere else, it is better that by reading much they should be polished into sharpness, than that by understanding little they should have room left for complaining that the argument has not been fairly conducted.

## CHAPTER 6

9. First, then, let us record for further consideration the case proposed for decision by Cyprian himself, with which he initiates the proceedings of the Council, and by which he shows a peaceful spirit, abounding in the fruitfulness of Christian charity. “Ye have read,” he says, “most beloved colleagues, what Jubaianus, our fellow-bishop, has written to me, consulting my poor ability about the unlawful and profane baptism of heretics, and what I have written back to him, expressing to him the same opinion that I have expressed once and again and often, that heretics

coming to the Church ought to be baptized, and sanctified with the baptism of the Church. Another letter also of Jubaianus has been read to you, in which, agreeably to his sincere and religious devotion, in answer to our epistle, he not only expressed his assent to it, but also gratefully acknowledged that he had received instruction. It remains that we should individually express our opinions on this same subject, judging no one, and removing no one from the right of communion if he should entertain a different opinion. For neither does any one of us set himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror force his colleagues to the necessity of obeying, since every bishop, in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of free judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another. But we are all awaiting the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ who alone has the power both of preferring us in the government of His Church, and of judging of our actions.”

#### CHAPTER 7

10. I have already, I think, argued to the best of my power, in the preceding books, in the interests of Catholic unanimity and counsel, in whose unity these continued as pious members, in reply not only to the letter which Cyprian wrote to Jubaianus, but also to that which he sent to Quintus, and that which, in conjunction with certain of his colleagues, he sent to certain other colleagues, and that which he sent to Pompeius. Wherefore it seems now to be fitting to consider also what the others severally thought, and that with the liberty of which he himself would not deprive us, as he says, “Judging no one, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain different opinions.” And that he did not say this with the object of arriving at the hidden thoughts of his colleagues, extracted as it were from their secret lurking-places, but because he really loved peace and unity, is very easily to be seen from other passages of the same sort, where he wrote to individuals as to Jubaianus himself. “These things,” he says, “we have written very shortly in answer to you, most beloved brother, according to our poor ability, not preventing any one of the bishops by our writing or judgment, from acting as he thinks right, having a free exercise of his own judgment.” And that it might not seem that any one, because of his entertaining different opinions in this same free exercise of his judgment,



should be driven from the society of his brethren, he goes on to say, “We, so far as lies in us, do not strive on behalf of heretics against our colleagues and fellow-bishops, with whom we maintain godly unity and the peace of our Lord;” and a little later he says, “Charity of spirit, respect for our fraternity, the bond of faith, the harmony of the priesthood, are by us maintained with patience and gentleness.” And so also in the epistle which he wrote to Magnus, when he was asked whether there was any difference in the efficacy of baptism by sprinkling or by immersion, “In this matter,” he says, “I am too modest and diffident to prevent any one by my judgment from thinking as he deems right, and acting as he thinks.” By which discourses he clearly shows that these subjects were being handled by them at a time when they were not yet received as decided beyond all question, but were being investigated with great care as being yet unrevealed. We, therefore, maintaining on the subject of the identity of all baptisms what must be acknowledged everywhere to be the custom of the universal Church, and what is confirmed by the decision of general Councils, and taking greater confidence also from the words of Cyprian, which allowed me even then to hold opinions differing from his own without forfeiting the right of communion, seeing that greater importance and praise were attached to unity, such as the blessed Cyprian and his colleagues, with whom he held that Council, maintained with those of different opinions, disturbing and overthrowing thereby the seditious calumnies of heretics and schismatics in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, speaking by His apostle, says, “Forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;” and again, by the mouth of the same apostle, “If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you,”—we, I say, propose for consideration and discussion the opinions of the holy bishops, without violating the bond of unity and peace with them, in maintaining which we imitate them so far as we can by the aid of the Lord Himself

## CHAPTER 8

11. Caecilius of Bilta said: “I know of one baptism in the one Church and of none outside the Church. The one will be where there is true hope and sure faith. For so it is written, One faith, one hope, one baptism.’ Not among

heretics, where there is no hope and a false faith; where all things are done by a lie; where one possessed of a devil exorcises; the question of the sacrament is asked by one from whose mouth and words proceeds a cancer; the faithless gives faith; the guilty gives pardon for sins and Antichrist baptizes in the name of Christ; one accursed of God blesses; the dead promises life; the unpeaceful gives peace; the blasphemer calls on God; the profane administers the priesthood; the sacrilegious sets up the altar. To all this is added this further evil that the servant of the devil dares to celebrate the eucharist. If this be not so, let those who stand by them prove that all of it is false concerning heretics. See the kind of things to which the Church is compelled to assent, being forced to communicate without baptism or the remission of sins. This, brethren, we ought to shun and avoid, separating ourselves from so great a sin, and holding to the one baptism which is granted to the Church alone.”

12. To this I answer, that all who even within the Church profess that they know God, but deny Him in their deeds, such as are the covetous and envious, and those who, because they hate their brethren, are pronounced to be murderers, not on my testimony, but on that of the holy Apostle John,—all these are both devoid of hope, because they have a bad conscience; and are faithless, because they do not do what they have vowed to God; and liars, because they make false professions; and possessed of devils, because they give place in their heart to the devil and his angels; and their words work corruption, since they corrupt good manners by evil communications; and they are infidels, because they laugh at the threats which God utters against such men; and accursed, because they live wickedly; and antichrists, because their lives are opposed to Christ; and cursed of God, since holy Scripture everywhere calls down curses on such men; and dead, because they are without the life of righteousness; and unpeaceful, because by their contrary deeds they are at variance with God’s behests; and blasphemous, because by their abandoned acts despite is done to the name of Christian; and profane, because they are spiritually shut out from that inner sanctuary of God; and sacrilegious, because by their evil life they defile the temple of God within themselves; and servants of the devil, because they do service to fraud and covetousness, which is idolatry. That of such a kind are some, nay very many, even within the Church, is testified both by Paul the apostle and

by Cyprian the bishop. Why, then, do they baptize? Why also are some, who “renounce the world in words and not in deeds,” baptized without being converted from a life like this, and not rebaptized when they are converted? And as to what he says with such indignation, “See the kind of things to which the Church is compelled to assent, being forced to communicate without baptism or the remission of sins,” he could never have used such expressions had there not been the other bishops who elsewhere forced men to such things. Whence also it is shown that at that time those men held the truer views who did not depart from the primitive custom, which is since confirmed by the consent of a general Council. But what does he mean by adding, “This, brethren, we ought to shun and avoid, separating ourselves from so great a sin?” For if he means that he is not to do nor to approve of this, that is another matter; but if he means to condemn and sever from him those that hold the contrary opinion, he is setting himself against the earlier words of Cyprian, “Judging no man, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he differ from us.”

#### CHAPTER 9

13. The elder Felix of Migirpa said: “I think that every one coming from heresy should be baptized. For in vain does any one suppose that he has been baptized there, seeing that there is no baptism save the one true baptism in the Church; for there is one Lord, and one faith, and one Church, in which rests the one baptism, and holiness, and the rest. For the things that are practised without have no power to work salvation.”

14. To what Felix of Migirpa said we answer as follows. If the one true baptism did not exist except in the Church, it surely would not exist in those who depart from unity. But it does exist in them, since they do not receive it when they return, simply because they had not lost it when they departed. But as regards his statement, that “the things that are practised without have no power to work salvation,” I agree with him, and think that it is quite true; for it is one thing that baptism should not be there, and another that it should have no power to work salvation. For when men come to the peace of the Catholic Church, then what was in them before they joined it, but did not profit them, begins at once to profit them.

## CHAPTER 10

15. To the declaration of Polycarp of Adrumetum, that “those who declare the baptism of heretics to be valid, make ours of none effect,” we answer, if that is the baptism of heretics which is given by heretics, then that is the baptism of the covetous and murderers which is given by them within the Church. But if this be not their baptism, neither is the other the baptism of heretics; and so it is Christ’s, by whomsoever it be given

## CHAPTER 11

16. Novatus of Thamugadis said: “Though we know that all Scripture gives its testimony respecting saving baptism, yet we ought to express our belief that heretics and schismatics, coming to the Church with the semblance of having been baptized, ought to be baptized in the unfailing fountain; and that therefore, according to the testimony of the Scriptures, and according to the decree of those most holy men, our colleagues, all schismatics and heretics who are converted to the Church ought to be baptized; and that, moreover, all that seemed to have received ordination should be admitted as simple laymen.”

17. Novatus of Thamugadis has stated what he has done, but he has brought forward no proofs by which to show that he ought to have acted as he did. For he has made mention of the testimony of the Scriptures, and the decree of his colleagues, but he has not adduced out of them anything which we could consider.

## CHAPTER 12

18. Nemesianus of Tubunae said: “That the baptism which is given by heretics and schismatics is not true is everywhere declared in the holy Scriptures, inasmuch as their very prelates are false Christs and false prophets, as the Lord declares by the mouth of Solomon, Whoso trusteth in lies, the same feedeth the winds; he also followeth flying birds. For he deserteth the ways of his own vineyard, and hath strayed from the paths of his own field. For he walketh through pathless and dry places, and a land destined to thirst; and he gathereth fruitless weeds in his hands.’ And again, Abstain from strange water, and drink not of a strange fountain, that thou

mayest live long, and that years may be added to thy life.’ And in the gospel our Lord Jesus Christ spake with His own voice, saying, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ This is the Spirit which from the beginning moved upon the face of the waters.’ For neither can the Spirit act without the water, nor the water without the Spirit. Ill, therefore, for themselves do some interpret, saying that by imposition of hands they receive the Holy Ghost, and are received into the Church, when it is manifest that they ought to be born again by both sacraments in the Catholic Church. For then indeed will they be able to become the sons of God, as the apostle says, Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God.’ All this the Catholic Church asserts. And again he says in the gospel, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; for the Spirit is God, and is born of God.’ Therefore all things whatsoever all heretics and schismatics do are carnal, as the apostle says, Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, seditions, heresies, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.’ The apostle condemns, equally with all the wicked, those also who cause divisions, that is, schismatics and heretics. Unless therefore they receive that saving baptism which is one, and found only in the Catholic Church, they cannot be saved, but will be condemned with the carnal in the judgment of the Lord.”

19. Nemesianus of Tubunae has advanced many passages of Scripture to prove his point; but he has in fact said much on behalf of the view of the Catholic Church, which we have undertaken to set forth and maintain. Unless, indeed, we must suppose that he does not “trust in what is false” who trusts in the hope of things temporal, as do all covetous men and robbers, and those “who renounce the world in words but not in deeds,” of whom Cyprian yet bears witness that such men not only baptize, but even are baptized within the Church. For they themselves also “follow flying birds,” since they do not attain to what they desire. But not only the heretic, but everyone who leads an evil life “deserteth the ways of his own

vineyard, and hath strayed from the paths of his own field. And he walketh through pathless and dry places, and a land destined to thirst; and he gathereth fruitless weeds in his hands;" because all justice is fruitful, and all iniquity is barren. Those, again, who "drink strange water out of a strange fountain," are found not only among heretics, but among all who do not live according to the teaching of God, and do live according to the teaching of the devil. For if he were speaking of baptism, he would not say, "Do not drink of a strange fountain," but, do not wash thyself in a strange fountain. Again, I do not see at all what aid he gets towards proving his point from the words of our Lord, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." For it is one thing to say that every one who shall enter into the kingdom of heaven is first born again of water and the Spirit, because except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, which is the Lord's saying, and is true; another thing to say that every one who is born of water and the Spirit shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, which is assuredly false. For Simon Magus also was born of water and of the Spirit, and yet he did not enter into the kingdom of heaven; and this may possibly be the case with heretics as well. Or if only those are born of the Spirit who are changed with a true conversion, all "who renounce the world in word and not in deed" are assuredly not born of the Spirit, but of water only, and yet they are within the Church, according to the testimony of Cyprian. For we must perforce grant one of two things,—either those who renounce the world deceitfully are born of the Spirit, though it is to their destruction, not to salvation, and therefore heretics may be so born; or if what is written, that "the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit," extends to proving as much as this, that those who renounce the world deceitfully are not born of the Spirit, then a man may be baptized with water, and not born of the Spirit, and Nemesianus says in vain that neither the Spirit can work without the water, nor the water without the Spirit. Indeed it has been already often shown how it is possible that men should have one baptism in common who have not one Church, as it is possible that in the body of the Church herself those who are sanctified by their righteousness, and those who are polluted through their covetousness, may not have the same one Spirit, and yet have the same one baptism. For it is said "one body," that is, the Church, just as it is said "one Spirit" and "one baptism." The other arguments which he has

adduced rather favor our position. For he has brought forward a proof from the gospel, in the words, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; for the Spirit is God, and born of God;” and he has advanced the argument that therefore all things that are done by any heretic or schismatic are carnal, as the apostle says, “The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness;” and so he goes through the list which the apostle there enumerates, amongst which he has reckoned heresies, since “they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Then he goes on to add, that “therefore the apostle condemns with all wicked men those also who cause division, that is, schismatics and heretics.” And in this he does well, that when he enumerates the works of the flesh, among which are also heresies, he found and declared that the apostle condemns them all alike. Let him therefore question the holy Cyprian himself, and learn from him how many even within the Church live according to the evil works of the flesh, which the apostle condemns in common with the heresies, and yet these both baptize and are baptized. Why then are heretics alone said to be incapable of possessing baptism, which is possessed by the very partners in their condemnation?

#### CHAPTER 13

20. Januarius of Lambaese said: “Following the authority of the holy Scriptures, I pronounce that all heretics should be baptized, and so admitted into the holy Church.”

21. To him we answer, that, following the authority of the holy Scriptures, a universal Council of the whole world decreed that the baptism of Christ was not to be disavowed even when found among heretics. But if he had brought forward any proof from the Scriptures, we should have shown either that they were not against us, or even that they were for us, as we proceed to do with him who follows.

#### CHAPTER 14

22. Lucius of Castra Galbae said: “Since the Lord hath said in His gospel, Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, that which is

salted from it shall be thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men;’ and seeing that again, after His resurrection, when sending forth His apostles, He commanded them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,—since then it is plain that heretics, that is, the enemies of Christ, have not the full confession of the sacrament, also that schismatics cannot reason with spiritual wisdom, since they themselves, by withdrawing when they have lost their savor from the Church, which is one, have become contrary to it, let that be done which is written, The houses of those that are opposed to the law must needs be cleansed;’ and it therefore follows that those who have been polluted by being baptized by men opposed to Christ should first be cleansed, and only then baptized.”

23. Lucius of Castra Galbae has brought forward a proof from the gospel, in the words of the Lord, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, that which is salted from it shall be good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men;” just as though we maintained that men when cast out were of any profit for the salvation either of themselves or of any one else. But those also who, though seeming to be within, are yet of such a kind, not only are without spiritually, but will in the end be separated in the body also. For all such are for nothing. But it does not therefore follow that the sacrament of baptism which is in them is nothing. For even in the very men who are cast out, if they return to their senses and come back, the salvation which had departed from them returns; but the baptism does not return, because it never had departed. And in what the Lord says, “Go therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” He did not permit any to baptize except the good, inasmuch as He did not say to the bad, “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” How then do the wicked baptize within, who cannot remit sins? How also is it that they baptize the wicked whose hearts are not changed, whose sins are yet upon them, as John says, “He that hateth his brother is in darkness even until now?” But if the sins of these men are remitted when they join themselves in the close bonds of love to the good and just, through whom sins are remitted in the



Church, though they have been baptized by the wicked, so the sins of those also are remitted who come from without and join themselves by the inner bond of peace to the same framework of the body of Christ. Yet the baptism of Christ should be acknowledged in both, and held invalid in none, whether before they are converted, though then it profit them nothing, or after they are converted, that so it may profit them, as he says, “Since they themselves, by withdrawing when they have lost their savor from the Church, which is one, have become contrary to it, let that be done which is written, The houses of those that are opposed to the law must need be cleansed.’ And it therefore follows,” he goes on to say, “that those who have been polluted by being baptized by men opposed to Christ should first be cleansed, and only then baptized.” What then? Are thieves and murderers not contrary to the law, which says, “Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal?” “They must therefore needs be cleansed.” Who will deny it? And yet not only those who are baptized by such within the Church, but also those who, being such themselves, are baptized without being changed in heart, are nevertheless exempt from further baptism when they are so changed. So great is the force of the sacrament of mere baptism, that though we allow that a man who has been baptized and continues to lead an evil life requires to be cleansed, we yet forbid him to be any more baptized.

#### CHAPTER 15

24. Crescens of Cirta said: “The letters of our most beloved Cyprian to Jubaianus, and also to Stephen, having been read in so large an assembly of our most holy brethren in the priesthood, containing as they do so large a body of sacred testimony derived from the Scriptures that give us our God, that we have every reason to assent to them, being all united by the grace of God, I give my judgment that all heretics or schismatics who wish to come to the Catholic Church should not enter therein unless they have been first exorcised and baptized; with the obvious exception of those who have been originally baptized in the Catholic Church, these being reconciled and admitted to the penance of the Church by the imposition of hands.”

25. Here we are warned once more to inquire why he says, “Except, of course, those who have been originally baptized in the Catholic Church.” Is it because they had not lost what they had before received? Why then could

they not also transmit outside the Church what they were able to possess outside? Is it that outside it is unlawfully transmitted? But neither is it lawfully possessed outside, and yet it is possessed; so it is unlawfully given outside, but yet it is given. But what is given to the person returning from heresy who had been baptized inside, is given to the person coming to the Church who had been baptized outside,—that is, that he may have lawfully inside what before he had unlawfully outside. But perhaps some one may ask what was said on this point in the letter of the blessed Cyprian to Stephen, which is mentioned in this judgment, though not in the opening address to the Council,—I suppose because it was not considered necessary. For Crescens stated that the letter itself had been read in the assembly, which I have no doubt was done, if I am not mistaken, as is customary, in order that the bishops, being already assembled, might receive some information at the same time on the subject contained in that letter. For it certainly has no bearing on the present subject; and I am more surprised at Crescens having thought fit to mention it at all, than at its having been passed over in the opening address. But if any one thinks that I have shrunk from bringing forward something which has been urged in it that is essential to the present point, let him read it and see that what I say is true; or if he finds it otherwise, let him convict me of falsehood. For that letter contains nothing whatsoever about baptism administered among heretics or schismatics, which is the subject of our present argument.

#### CHAPTER 16

26. Nicomedes of Segermi said: “My judgment is that heretics coming to the Church should be baptized, because they can obtain no remission of sins among sinners outside.”

27. The answer to which is: The judgment of the whole Catholic Church is that heretics, being already baptized with the baptism of Christ, although in heresy, should not be rebaptized on coming to the Church. For if there is no remission of sins among sinners, neither can sinners within the Church remit sins; and yet those who have been baptized by them are not rebaptized.

#### CHAPTER 17

28. Monnulus of Girba said: “The truth of our mother, the Catholic Church, hath continued, and still continues among us, brethren, especially in the threefold nature of baptism, as our Lord says, Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Since, therefore,” he goes on to say, “we know clearly that heretics have neither Father, Son, nor Holy Ghost, they ought, on coming to our mother, the Church, to be truly regenerated and baptized, that the cancer which they had, and the wrath of condemnation, and the destructive energy of error may be sanctified by the holy and heavenly laver.”

29. To this we answer, That all who are baptized with the baptism that is consecrated in the words of the gospel have the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the sacrament alone; but that in heart and in life neither do those have them who live an abandoned and accursed life within.

#### CHAPTER 18

30. Secundinus of Cedias said: “Since our Lord Christ said, He that is not with me is against me,’ and the Apostle John declares those who go out from the Church to be antichrists, without all doubt the enemies of Christ, and those who are called antichrists, cannot minister the grace of the baptism which gives salvation; and therefore my judgment is that those who take refuge in the Church from the snares of heresy should be baptized by us, who of His condescension are called the friends of God.”

31. The answer to which is, That all are the opponents of Christ, to whom, on their saying, “Lord, have we not in Thy name done many wonderful things?” with all the rest that is there recorded, He shall at the last day answer, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity,”—all which kind of chaff is destined for the fire, if it persevere to the last in its wickedness, whether any part of it fly outside before its winnowing, or whether it seem to be within. If, therefore, those heretics who come to the Church are to be again baptized, that they may be baptized by the friends of God, are those covetous men, those robbers, murderers, the friends of God, or must those whom they have baptized be baptized afresh?

#### CHAPTER 19

32. Felix of Bagai said: “As when the blind leads the blind, both fall into the ditch, so when a heretic baptizes a heretic, both fall together into death.”

33. This is true, but it does not follow that what he adds is true. “And therefore,” he says, “the heretic must be baptized and brought to life, lest we who are alive should hold communion with the dead.” Were they not dead who said, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die?” for they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Those then who were corrupted by their evil communications, and followed them, were not they likewise falling with them into the pit? And yet among them there were men to whom the apostle was writing as being already baptized; nor would they, therefore, if they were corrected, be baptized afresh. Does not the same apostle say, “To be carnally-minded is death?” and certainly the covetous, the deceivers, the robbers, in the midst of whom Cyprian himself was groaning, were carnally-minded. What then? Did the dead hurt him who was living in unity? Or who would say, that because such men had or gave the baptism of Christ, that it was therefore violated by their iniquities?

#### CHAPTER 20

34. Polianus of Mileum said: “It is right that a heretic should be baptized in the holy Church.”

35. Nothing, indeed, could be expressed more shortly. But I think this too is short: It is right that the baptism of Christ should not be depreciated in the Church of Christ.

#### CHAPTER 21

36. Theogenes of Hippo Regius said: “According to the sacrament of the heavenly grace of God which we have received, we believe in the one only baptism which is in the holy Church.”

37. This may be my own judgment also. For it is so balanced, that it contains nothing contrary to the truth. For we also believe in the one only baptism which is in the holy Church. Had he said, indeed, We believe in that which is in the holy Church alone, the same answer must have been made to him as to the rest. But as it is, since he has expressed himself in this

wise, “We believe in the one only baptism which is in the holy Church,” so that it is asserted that it exists in the holy Church, but not denied that it may be elsewhere as well, whatever his meaning may have been, there is no need to argue against these words. For if I were questioned on the several points, first, whether there was one baptism, I should answer that there was one. Then if I were asked, whether this was in the holy Church, I should answer that it was. In the third place, if it were asked whether I believed in this baptism, I should answer that I did so believe; and consequently I should answer that I believed in the one baptism which is in the holy Church. But if it were asked whether it was found in the holy Church alone, and not among heretics and schismatics, I should answer that, in common with the whole Church, I believed the contrary. But since he did not insert this in his judgment, I should consider that it was mere wantonness if I added words which I did not find there, for the sake of arguing against them. For if he were to say, There is one water of the river Euphrates, which is in Paradise, no one could gainsay the truth of what he said. But if he were asked whether that water were in Paradise and nowhere else, and were to say that this was so, he would be saying what was false. For, besides Paradise, it is also in those lands into which it flows from that source. But who is rash enough to say that he would have been likely to assert what is false, when it is quite possible that he was asserting what is true? Wherefore the words of this judgment require no contradiction, because they in no wise run counter to the truth.

## CHAPTER 22

38. Dativus of Badaie said “We, so far as lies within our power, refuse to communicate with a heretic, unless he has been baptized in the Church, and received remission of his sins.”

39. The answer to this is: If your reason for wishing him to be baptized is that he has not received remission of sins, supposing you find a man within the Church who has been baptized, though entertaining hatred towards his brother, since the Lord cannot lie, who says, “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses,” will you bid such an one, when corrected, to be baptized afresh? Assuredly not; so neither should you bid the heretic. It is clear that we must not pass

unnoticed why he did not briefly say, “We do not communicate with a heretic,” but added, “so far as lies within our power.” For he saw that a greater number agreed with this view, from whose communion, however, he and his friends could not separate themselves, lest unity should be impaired, and so he added, “so far as lies within our power,”—showing beyond all doubt that he did not willingly communicate with those whom he held to be without baptism, but that yet all things were to be endured for the sake of peace and unity; just as was done also by those who thought that Dativus and his party were in the wrong, and who held what afterwards was taught by a fuller declaration of the truth, and urged by ancient custom, which received the stronger confirmation of a later Council; yet in turn, with anxious piety, they showed toleration towards each other, though without violation of Christian charity they entertained different opinions, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, till God should reveal to one of them, were he otherwise minded, even this error of his ways. And to this I would have those give heed, by whom unity is attacked on the authority of this very Council by which it is declared how much unity should be loved.

#### CHAPTER 23

40. Successus of Abbir Germaniciana said: “Heretics may either do nothing or everything. If they can baptize, they can also give the Holy Spirit; but if they cannot give the Holy Spirit, because they do not possess the Holy Spirit, then can they not either spiritually baptize. Therefore we give our judgment that heretics should be baptized.”

41. To this we may answer almost word for word: Murderers may either do nothing or everything. If they can baptize, they can also give the Holy Spirit; but if they cannot give the Holy Spirit, because they do not possess the Holy Spirit, then can they not either spiritually baptize. Therefore we give our judgment that persons baptized by murderers, or murderers themselves who have been baptized without being converted, should, when they have corrected themselves, be baptized. Yet this is not true. For “whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer;” and Cyprian knew such men within the Church, who certainly baptized. Therefore it is to no purpose that words of this sort are used concerning heretics.

42. Fortunatus of Thuccabori said: “Jesus Christ our Lord and God, the Son of God the Father and Creator, built His Church upon a rock, not upon heresy, and gave the power of baptizing to bishops, not to heretics. Wherefore those who are outside the Church, and stand against Christ, scattering His sheep and flock, cannot baptize outside.”

43. He added the word “outside” in order that he might not be answered with a like brevity to Successus. For otherwise he might also have been answered word for word: Jesus Christ our Lord and God, the Son of God the Father and Creator, built His Church upon a rock, not upon iniquity, and gave the power of baptizing to bishops, not to the unrighteous. Wherefore those who do not belong to the rock on which they build, who hear the word of God and do it, but, living contrary to Christ in hearing the word and not doing it, and hereby building on the sand, in this way scatter His sheep and flock by the example of an abandoned character, cannot baptize. Might not this be said with all the semblance of truth? and yet it is false. For the unrighteous do baptize, since those robbers are unrighteous whom Cyprian maintained to be at unity with himself. But for this reason, says the Donatist, he adds “outside.” Why therefore can they not baptize outside? Is it because they are worse from the very fact that they are outside? But it makes no difference, in respect of the validity of baptism, how much worse the minister may be. For there is not so much difference between bad and worse as between good and bad; and yet, when the bad baptizes, he gives the selfsame sacrament as the good. Therefore, also, when the worse baptizes, he gives the selfsame sacrament as the less bad. Or is it that it is not in respect of man’s merit, but of the sacrament of baptism itself, that it cannot be given outside? If this were so, neither could it be possessed outside, and it would be necessary that a man should be baptized again so often as he left the Church and again returned to it.

44. Further, if we inquire more carefully what is meant by “outside,” especially as he himself makes mention of the rock on which the Church is built, are not they in the Church who are on the rock, and they who are not on the rock, not in the Church either? Now, therefore, let us see whether they build their house upon a rock who hear the words of Christ and do

them not. The Lord Himself declares the contrary, saying, “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;” and a little later, “Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.” If, therefore, the Church is on a rock, those who are on the sand, because they are outside the rock, are necessarily outside the Church. Let us recollect, therefore, how many Cyprian mentions as placed within who build upon the sand, that is, who hear the words of Christ and do them not. And therefore, because they are on the sand, they are proved to be outside the rock, that is, outside the Church; yet even while they are so situated, and are either not yet or never changed for the better, not only do they baptize and are baptized, but the baptism which they have remains valid in them though they are destined to damnation.

45. Neither can it be said in this place, Yet who is there that doeth all the words of the Lord which are written in the evangelic sermon itself, at the end of which He says, that he who heard the said words and did them built upon a rock, and he who heard them and did them not built upon the sand? For, granting that by certain persons all the words are not accomplished, yet in the same sermon He has appointed the remedy, saying, “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.” And after the Lord’s prayer had been recorded in detail in the same sermon, He says, “For I say unto you, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Hence also Peter says, “For charity shall cover the multitude of sins;” which charity they certainly did not have, and on this account they built upon the sand, of whom the same Cyprian says, that within the Church they held conversation, even in the time of the apostles, in unkindly hatred alien from Christian charity; and therefore they seemed indeed to be within, but really were without, because they were not on that rock by which the Church is signified.

## CHAPTER 25

46. Sedatus of Tuburbo said: “Inasmuch as water, sanctified by the prayer of the priest in the Church, washes away sins, just so much does it multiply



sins when infected, as by a cancer, with the words of heretics. Wherefore one must strive, with all such efforts as conduce to peace, that no one who has been infected and tainted by heretical error should refuse to receive the one true baptism, with which whosoever is not baptized shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven.”

47. To this we answer, that if the water is not sanctified, when through want of skill the priest who prays utters some words of error, many, not only of the bad, but of the good brethren in the Church itself, fail to sanctify the water. For the prayers of many are corrected every day on being recited to men of greater learning, and many things are found in them contrary to the Catholic faith. Supposing, then, that it were shown that some persons were baptized when these prayers had been uttered over the water, will they be bidden to be baptized afresh? Why not? Because generally the fault in the prayer is more than counterbalanced by the intent of him who offers it; and those fixed words of the gospel, without which baptism cannot be consecrated, are of such efficacy, that, by their virtue, anything faulty that is uttered in the prayer contrary to the rule of faith is made of no effect, just as the devil is excluded by the name of Christ. For it is clear that if a heretic utters a faulty prayer, he has no good intent of love whereby that want of skill may be compensated, and therefore he is like any envious or spiteful person in the Catholic Church itself, such as Cyprian proves to exist within the Church. Or one might offer some prayer, as not unfrequently happens, in which he should speak against the rule of faith, since many rush into the use of prayers which are composed not only by unskillful men who love to talk, but even by heretics, and in the simplicity of ignorance, not being able to discern their true character, use them, thinking they are good; and yet what is erroneous in them does not vitiate what is right, but rather it is rendered null thereby, just as in the man of good hope and approved faith, who yet is but a man, if in anything he be otherwise minded, what he holds aright is not thereby vitiated until God reveal to him also that in which he is otherwise minded. But supposing that the man himself is wicked and perverse, then, if he should offer an upright prayer, in no part contrary to the Catholic faith, it does not follow that because the prayer is right the man himself is also right; and if over some he offer an erroneous prayer, God is present to uphold the words of His gospel, without which the baptism of

Christ cannot be consecrated, and He Himself consecrates His sacrament, that in the recipient, either before he is baptized, or when he is baptized, or at some future time when he turns in truth to God, that very sacrament may be profitable to salvation, which, were he not to be converted, would be powerful to his destruction. But who is there who does not know that there is no baptism of Christ, if the words of the gospel in which consists the outward visible sign be not forthcoming? But you will more easily find heretics who do not baptize at all, than any who baptize without those words. And therefore we say, not that every baptism (for in many of the blasphemous rites of idols men are said to be baptized), but that the baptism of Christ, that is, every baptism consecrated in the words of the gospel, is everywhere the same, and cannot be vitiated by any perversity on the part of any men.

48. We must certainly not lightly pass over in this judgment that he here inserted a clause, and says, “Wherefore we must strive, with all such efforts as conduce to peace, that no one who has been infected,” etc. For he had regard to those words of the blessed Cyprian in his opening speech, “Judging no man, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he entertain a different view.” See of what power is the love of unity and peace in the good sons of the Church, that they should choose rather to show tolerance towards those whom they called sacrilegious and profane, being admitted, as they thought, without the sacrament of baptism, if they could not correct them as they thought was right, than on their account to break that holy bond, lest on account of the tares the wheat also should be rooted out,—permitting, so far as rested with them, as in that noblest judgment of Solomon, that the infant body should rather be nourished by the false mother than be cut in pieces. But this was the opinion both of those who held the truer view about the sacrament of baptism, and of those to whom God, in consideration of their great love, was purposing to reveal any point in which they were otherwise minded.

## CHAPTER 26

49. Privatianus of Sufetula said: “He who says that heretics have the power of baptizing should first say who it was that founded heresy. For if heresy is

of God, it may have the divine favor; but if it be not of God, how can it either have or confer on any one the grace of God?"

50. This man may thus be answered word for word: He who says that malicious and envious persons have the power of baptizing, should first say who was the founder of malice and envy. For if malice and envy are of God, they may have the divine favor; but if they are not of God, how can they either have or confer on any one the grace of God? But as these words are in the same way most manifestly false, so are also those which these were uttered to confute. For the malicious and envious baptize, as even Cyprian himself allows, because he bears testimony that they also are within. So therefore even heretics may baptize, because baptism is the sacrament of Christ; but envy and heresy are the works of the devil. Yet though a man possesses them, he does not thereby cause that if he have the sacrament of Christ, it also should itself be reckoned in the number of the devil's works.

#### CHAPTER 27

51. Privatus of Sufes said: "What can be said of the man who approves the baptism of heretics, save that he communicates with heretics?"

52. To this we answer: It is not the baptism of heretics which we approve in heretics, as it is not the baptism of the covetous, or the treacherous, or deceitful, or of robbers, or of envious men which we approve in them; for all of these are unjust, but Christ is just, whose sacrament existing in them, they do not in its essence violate. Otherwise another man might say: What can be said of the man who approves the baptism of the unjust, save that he communicates with the unjust. And if this objection were brought against the Catholic Church herself, it would be answered just as I have answered the above.

#### CHAPTER 28

53. Hortensianus of Lares said: "How many baptisms there are, let those who uphold or favor heretics determine. We assert one baptism of the Church, which we only know in the Church. Or how can those baptize any one in the name of Christ whom Christ Himself declares to be His enemies?"

54. Giving answer to this man in a like tenor of words, we say: Let those who uphold or favor the unrighteous see to it: we recall to the Church when we can the one baptism which we know to be of the Church alone, wherever it be found. Or how can they baptize any one in the name of Christ whom Christ Himself declares to be His enemies? For He says to all the unrighteous, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity;” and yet, when they baptize, it is not themselves that baptize, but He of whom John says, “The same is He which baptizeth.”

#### CHAPTER 29

55. Cassius of Macomades said: “Since there cannot be two baptisms, he who grants baptism unto heretics takes it away from himself. I therefore declare my judgment that heretics, those objects for our tears, those masses of corruption, should be baptized when they begin to come to the Church, and that so being washed by the sacred and divine laver, and enlightened with the light of life, they may be received into the Church,—as being now made not enemies, but peaceful; not strangers, but of the household of the faith of the Lord; not bastards, but sons of God; partaking not of error, but of salvation,—with the exception of those who, being believers transplanted from the Church, had gone over to heresy, and that these should be restored by the laying on of hands.”

56. Another might say: Since there cannot be two baptisms, he who grants baptism to the unrighteous takes it away from himself. But even our opponents would join us in resisting such a man when he says that we grant baptism to the unrighteous, which is not of the unrighteous, like their unrighteousness, but of Christ, of whom is righteousness, and whose sacrament, even among the unrighteous, is not unrighteous. What, therefore, they would join us in saying of the unrighteous, that let them say to themselves of heretics. And therefore he should rather have said as follows: I therefore give my judgment that heretics, those objects for our tears, those masses of corruption, should not be baptized when they begin to come to the Church, if they already have the baptism of Christ, but should be corrected from their error. For we may similarly say of the unrighteous, of whom the heretics are a part: I therefore give my judgment that the unrighteous, those objects for our tears, and masses of corruption, if they

have been already baptized, should not be baptized again when they begin to come to the Church, that is, to that rock outside which are all who hear the words of Christ and do them not; but being already washed with the sacred and divine laver, and now further enlightened with the light of truth, should be received into the Church no longer as enemies but as peaceful, for the unrighteous have no peace; no longer as strangers, but of the household of the faith of the Lord, for to the unrighteous it is said, “How then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?” no longer as bastards, but the sons of God, for the unrighteous are the sons of the devil, partaking not of error but of salvation, for un-righteousness cannot save. And by the Church I mean that rock, that dove, that garden enclosed and fountain sealed, which is recognized only in the wheat, not in the chaff, whether that be scattered far apart by the wind, or appear to be mingled with the corn even till the last winnowing. In vain, therefore, did Cassius add, “With the exception of those who, being believers transplanted from the Church, had gone over to heresy.” For if even they themselves had lost baptism by seceding, to themselves also let it be restored; but if they had not lost it, let what was given by them receive due recognition.

#### CHAPTER 30

57. Another Januarius of Vicus Caesaris said: “If error does not obey truth, much more does truth refuse assent to error; and therefore we stand by the Church in which we preside, so that, claiming her baptism for herself alone, we baptize those whom the Church has not baptized.”

58. We answer: Whom the Church baptizes, those that rock baptizes outside which are all they who hear the words of Christ and do them not. Let all, therefore, be baptized again who have been baptized by such. But if this is not done, then, as we recognize the baptism of Christ in these, so should we recognize it in heretics, though we either condemn or correct their unrighteousness and error.

#### CHAPTER 31

59. Another Secundinus of Carpis said: “Are heretics Christians or not? If they are Christians, why are they not in the Church of God? If they are not

Christians, let them be made so. Else what will be the reference in the discourse of the Lord, in which He says, He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad?’ Whence it is clear that on strange children and the offspring of Antichrist the Holy Spirit cannot descend by the laying on of hands alone, since it is clear that heretics have not baptism.”

60. To this we answer: Are the unrighteous Christians or not? If they are Christians, why are they not on that rock on which the Church is built? for they hear the words of Christ and do them not. If they are not Christians, let them be made so. Else what will be the reference in the discourse of our Lord, in which He says, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad?” For they scatter His sheep who lead them to the ruin of their lives by a false imitation of the Lord. Whence it is clear that upon strange children (as all the unrighteous are called), and upon the offspring of Antichrist (which all are who oppose themselves to Christ), the Holy Spirit cannot descend by the laying on of hands alone, if there be not added a true conversion of the heart; since it is clear that the unrighteous, so long as they are unrighteous, may indeed have baptism, but cannot have the salvation of which baptism is the sacrament. For let us see whether heretics are described in that psalm where the following words are used of strange children: “Deliver me, O Lord, from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood: whose sons are like young shoots well established, and their daughters polished after the similitude of the temple. Their garners are full, affording all manner of store; their sheep are fruitful, bringing forth plenteously in their streets; their oxen are strong: there is no breaking down of their fence, no opening of a passage out, no complaining in their streets. Men deemed happy the people that is in such a case; rather blessed is the people whose God is the Lord.” If, therefore, those are strange children who place their happiness in temporal things, and in the abundance of earthly prosperity, and despise the commandments of the Lord, let us see whether these are not the very same of whom Cyprian so speaks, transforming them also into himself, that he may show that he is speaking of men with whom he held communion in the sacraments: “In not keeping,” he says, “the way of the Lord, nor observing the heavenly commandments given us for our

salvation. Our Lord did the will of His Father, and we do not do the will of the Lord, being eager about our patrimony or our gains, following after pride, and so forth.” But if these could both have and transmit baptism, why is it denied that it may exist among strange children, whom he yet exhorts, that, by keeping the heavenly commandments conveyed to them through the only-begotten Son, they should deserve to be His brethren and the sons of God?

#### CHAPTER 32

61. Victorius of Thabraca said: “If heretics may baptize, and give remission of sins, why do we destroy their credit, and call them heretics?”

62. What if another were to say: If the unrighteous may baptize, and give remission of sins, why do we destroy their credit, and call them unrighteous? The answer which we should give to such an one concerning the unrighteous may also be given to the other concerning heretics,—that is, in the first place, that the baptism with which they baptize is not theirs; and secondly, that it does not follow that whosoever has the baptism of Christ is also certain of the remission of his sins if he has this only in the outward sign, and is not converted with a true conversion of the heart, so that he who gives remission should himself have remission of his sins.

#### CHAPTER 33

63. Another Felix of Uthina said: “No one can doubt, most holy brethren in the priesthood, that human presumption has not so much power as the adorable and venerable majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ. Remembering then the danger, we ought not only to observe this ourselves, but to confirm it by our general consent, that all heretics who come to the bosom of our mother the Church be baptized, that the heretical mind, which has been polluted by long-continued corruption, may be reformed when cleansed by the sanctification of the laver.”

64. Perhaps the man who has placed the strength of his case for the baptizing of heretics in the cleansing away of the long-continued corruption, would spare those who, having fallen headlong into some heresy, had remained in it a brief space, and presently being corrected, had

passed from thence to the Catholic Church. Furthermore, he has himself failed to observe that it might be said that all unrighteous persons who come to that rock, in which is understood the Church, should be baptized, so that the unrighteous mind, which was building outside the rock upon the sand by hearing the words of Christ and not doing them, might be reformed when cleansed by the sanctification of the laver; and yet this is not done if they have been baptized already, even if it be proved that such was their character when they were baptized, that is, that they “renounced the world in words and not in deeds.”

#### CHAPTER 34

65. Quietus of Burug said: “We who live by faith ought with believing observance to obey what has been before foretold for our instruction. For it is written in Solomon, He that is washed by one dead, what availeth his washing?” Which assuredly he says of those who are washed by heretics, and of those who wash. For if they who are baptized among them receive eternal life through the remission of their sins, why do they come to the Church? But if no salvation is received from a dead person, and they therefore, acknowledging their former error, return with penance to the truth, they ought to be sanctified with the one life-giving baptism which is in the Catholic Church.”

66. What it is to be baptized by the dead, we have already, without prejudice to the more careful consideration of the same scripture, sufficiently declared before. But I would ask why it is that they wish heretics alone to be considered dead, when Paul the apostle has said generally of sin, “The wages of sin is death;” and again, “To be carnally minded is death.” And when he says that a widow that liveth in pleasure is dead, how are they not dead “who renounce the world in words and not in deeds”? What, therefore, is the profit of washing in him who is baptized by them, except, indeed, that if he himself also is of the same character, he has the laver indeed, but it does not profit him to salvation? But if he by whom he is baptized is such, but the man who is baptized is turned to the Lord with no false heart, he is not baptized by that dead person, but by that living One of whom it is said, “The same is He which baptizeth.” But to what he says of heretics, that if they who are baptized among them receive eternal



life through the remission of their sins, why do they come to the Church? we answer: They come for this reason, that although they have received the baptism of Christ up to the point of the celebration of the sacrament, yet they cannot attain to life eternal save through the charity of unity; just as neither would those envious and malicious ones attain to life eternal, who would not have their sins forgiven them, even if they entertained hatred only against those from whom they suffered wrong; since the Truth said, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses," how much less when they were hating those towards whom they were rewarding evil for good? And yet these men, though "renouncing the world in words and not in deeds," would not be baptized again, if they should afterwards be corrected, but they would be made holy by the one living baptism. And this is indeed in the Catholic Church, but not in it alone, as neither is it in the saints alone who are built upon the rock, and of whom that one dove is composed.

#### CHAPTER 35

67. Castus of Sicca said: He who presumes to follow custom in despite of truth is either envious and evilly disposed towards the brethren to whom the truth is revealed, or else he is ungrateful towards God, by whose inspiration His Church is instructed."

68. If this man proved that those who differed from him, and held the view that has since been held by the whole world under the sanction of a Christian Council, were following custom so as to despise truth, we should have reason for fearing these words; but seeing that this custom is found both to have had its origin in truth and to have been confirmed by truth, we have nothing to fear in this judgment. And yet, if they were envious or evilly disposed towards the brethren, or ungrateful towards God, see with what kind of men they were willing to hold communion; see what kind of men, holding different opinions from their own, they treated as Cyprian enjoined them at the first, not removing them from the right of communion; see by what kind of men they were not polluted in the preservation of unity; see how greatly the bond of peace was to be loved; see what views they hold who bring charges against us, founded on the Council of bishops, their predecessors, whose example they do not imitate, and by whose example,

when the rights of the case are considered, they are condemned. If it was the custom, as this judgment bears witness, that heretics coming to the Church should be received with the baptism which they already had, either this was done rightly, or the evil do not pollute the good in unity. If it was rightly done, why do they accuse the world because they are so received? But if the evil do not pollute the good in unity, how do they defend themselves against the charge of sacrilegious separation?

#### CHAPTER 36

69. Eucratius of Theni said: “Our God and Lord Jesus Christ, teaching the apostles with His own mouth, fully laid down our faith, and the grace of baptism, and the rule of the law of the Church, saying, Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Therefore the false and unrighteous baptism of heretics is to be repudiated by us, and contradicted with all solemnity of witness, seeing that from their mouth issues not life, but poison, not heavenly grace, but blaspheming of the Trinity. And so it is plain that heretics coming to the Church ought to be baptized with perfect and Catholic baptism, that, being purified from the blasphemy of their presumption, they may be reformed by the grace of the Holy Spirit.”

70. Clearly, if the baptism is not consecrated in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, it should be considered to be of the heretics, and repudiated as unrighteous by us with all solemnity of witness; but if we discern this name in it, we do better to distinguish the words of the gospel from heretical error, and approve what is sound in them, correcting what is faulty.

#### CHAPTER 37

71. Libosus of Vaga said: “The Lord says in the gospel, I am the truth;’ He did not say, I am custom. Therefore, when the truth is made manifest, let custom yield to truth; so that, if even in time past any one did not baptize heretics in the Church, he may now begin to baptize them.”

72. Here he has in no way tried to show how that is the truth to which he says that custom ought to yield. But it is of more importance that he helps

us against those who have separated themselves from unity, by confessing that the custom existed, than that he thinks it ought to yield to a truth which he does not show. For the custom is of such a nature, that if it admitted sacrilegious men to the altar of Christ without the cleansing of baptism, and polluted none of the good men who remained in unity, then all who have cut themselves off from the same unity, in which they could not be polluted by the contagion of any evil persons whatsoever, have separated themselves without reason, and have committed the manifest sacrilege of schism. But if all perished in pollution through that custom, from what cavern do they issue without the original truth, and with all the cunning of calumny? If, however, the custom was a right one by which heretics were thus received, let them abandon their madness, let them confess their error; let them come to the Catholic Church, not that they may be bathed again with the sacrament of baptism, but that they may be cured from the wound of severance.

#### CHAPTER 38

73. Lucius of Thebaste said: “I declare my judgment that heretics, and blasphemers, and unrighteous men, who with various words pluck away the sacred and adorable words of the Scriptures, should be held accursed, and therefore exorcised and baptized.”

74. I too think that they should be held accursed, but not that therefore they should be exorcised and baptized; for it is their own falsehood which I hold accursed, but Christ’s sacrament which I venerate.

#### CHAPTER 39

75. Eugenius of Ammedera said: “I too pronounce this same judgment, that heretics should be baptized.”

76. To him we answer: But this is not the judgment which the Church pronounces, to which also God has now revealed in a plenary Council the point in which ye were then still otherwise minded, but because saving charity was in you, ye remained in unity.

#### CHAPTER 40

77. Also another Felix of Ammacura said: “I too, following the authority of the holy Scriptures, give my judgment that heretics should be baptized, and with them those also who maintain that they have been baptized among schismatics. For if, according to the warning of Christ, our fountain is sealed to ourselves, let all the enemies of our Church understand that it cannot belong to others; nor can He who is the Shepherd of our flock give the water unto salvation to two different peoples. And therefore it is clear that neither heretics nor schismatics can receive anything heavenly, who dare to accept from men that are sinners and aliens from the Church. When the giver has no ground to stand upon, surely neither can the receiver derive any profit.”

78. To him we answer, that the holy Scriptures nowhere have enjoined that heretics baptized among heretics should be baptized afresh, but that they have shown in many places that all are aliens from the Church who are not on the rock, nor belong to the members of the dove, and yet that they baptize and are baptized and have the sacrament of salvation without salvation. But how our fountain is like the fountain of Paradise, in that, like it, it flows forth even beyond the bounds of Paradise, has been sufficiently set forth above; and that “He who is the Shepherd of our flock cannot give the water unto salvation to two different peoples,” that is, to one that is His own, and to another that is alien, I fully agree in admitting. But does it follow that because the water is not unto salvation it is not the identical water? For the water of the deluge was for salvation unto those who were placed within the ark, but it brought death to those without, and yet it was the same water. And many aliens, that is to say, envious persons, whom Cyprian declares and proves from Scripture to be of the party of the devil, seem as it were to be within, and yet, if they were not without the ark, they would not perish by water. For such men are slain by baptism, as the sweet savor of Christ was unto death to those of whom the apostle speaks. Why then do not either heretics or schismatics receive anything heavenly, just as thorns or tares, like those who were without the ark received indeed the rain from the floods of heaven, but to destruction, not to salvation? And so I do not take the pains to refute what he said in conclusion: “When the giver has no ground to stand upon, surely neither can the receiver derive any profit,” since we also say that it does not profit the receivers while they receive it in

heresy, consenting with the heretics; and therefore they come to Catholic peace and unity, not that they may receive baptism, but that what they had received may begin to profit them.

#### CHAPTER 41

79. Also another Januarius of Muzuli said: “I wonder that, while all acknowledge that there is one baptism, all do not understand the unity of the same baptism. For the Church and heresy are two distinct things. If heretics have baptism we have it not; but if we have it, heretics cannot have it. But there is no doubt that the Church alone possesses the baptism of Christ, since it alone possesses both the favor and the truth of Christ.”

80. Another might equally say, and say with equal want of truth: I wonder that, while all confess there is one baptism, all do not understand the unity of baptism. For righteousness and unrighteousness are two distinct things. If the unrighteous have baptism, the righteous have it not; but if the righteous have it, the unrighteous cannot have it. But there is no doubt that the righteous alone possess the baptism of Christ, since they alone possess both the favor and the truth of Christ. This is certainly false, as they confess themselves. For those envious ones also who are of the party of the devil, though placed within the Church, as Cyprian tells us, and who were well known to the Apostle Paul, had baptism, but did not belong to the members of that dove which is safely sheltered on the rock.

#### CHAPTER 42

81. Adelphius of Thasbalte said: “It is surely without cause that they find fault with the truth in false and invidious terms, saying that we rebaptize, since the Church does not rebaptize heretics, but baptizes them.”

82. Truly enough it does not rebaptize them, because it only baptizes those who were not baptized before; and this earlier custom has only been confirmed in a later Council by a more careful perfecting of the truth.

#### CHAPTER 43

83. Demetrius of the Lesser Leptis said: “We uphold one baptism, because we claim for the Catholic Church alone what is her own. But those who say that heretics baptize truly and lawfully are themselves the men who make, not two, but many baptisms; for since heresies are many in number, the baptisms, too, will be reckoned according to their number.”

84. To him we answer: If this were so, then would as many baptisms be reckoned as there are works of the flesh, of which the apostle says “that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God;” among which are reckoned also heresies; and so many of those very works are tolerated within the Church as though in the chaff, and yet there is one baptism for them all, which is not vitiated by any work of unrighteousness.

#### CHAPTER 44

85. Vincentius of Thibari said: “We know that heretics are worse than heathens. If they, being converted, wish to come to God, they have assuredly a rule of truth, which the Lord by His divine precept committed to the apostles, saying, Go ye, lay on hands in my name, cast out devils;’ and in another place, Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Therefore, first by the laying on of hands in exorcism, secondly by regeneration in baptism, they may come to the promises of Christ; but my judgment is that in no other way should this be done.”

86. By what rule he asserts that heretics are worse than heathens I do not know, seeing that the Lord says, “If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.” Is a heretic worse even than such? I do not gainsay it. I do not, however, allow that because the man himself is worse than a heathen, that is, than a Gentile and pagan, therefore whatever the sacrament contains that is Christ’s is mingled with his vices and character, and perishes through the corruption of such admixture. For if even those who depart from the Church, and become not the followers but the founders of heresies, have been baptized before their secession, they continue to have baptism, although, according to the above rule, they are worse than heathens; for if on correction they return, they do not receive it, as they certainly would do if they had lost it. It is therefore possible that a

man may be worse than a heathen, and yet that the sacrament of Christ may not only be in him, but be not a whit inferior to what it is in a holy and righteous man. For although to the extent of his powers he has not preserved the sacrament, but done it violence in heart and will, yet so far as the sacrament's own nature is concerned, it has remained unhurt in its integrity even in the man who despised and rejected it. Were not the people of Sodom heathens, that is to say, Gentiles? The Jews therefore were worse, to whom the Lord says, "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee;" and to whom the prophet says, "Thou hast justified Sodom," that is to say, in comparison with thee Sodom is righteous. Shall we, however, maintain that on this account the holy sacraments which existed among the Jews partook of the nature of the Jews themselves,—those sacraments which the Lord Himself also accepted, and sent the lepers whom He had cleansed to fulfill them, of which when Zacharias was administering them, the angel stood by him, and declared that his prayer had been heard while he was sacrificing in the temple? These same sacraments were both in the good men of that time, and in those bad men who were worse than are the heathens, seeing that they were ranked before the Sodomites for wickedness, and yet those sacraments were perfect and holy in both.

87. For even if the Gentiles themselves could have anything holy and right in their doctrines, our saints did not condemn it, however much the Gentiles themselves were to be detested for their superstitions and idolatry and pride, and the rest of their corruptions, and to be punished with judgment from heaven unless they submitted to correction. For when Paul the apostle also was saying something concerning God before the Athenians, he adduced as a proof of what he said, that certain of them had said something to the same effect, which certainly would not be condemned but recognized in them if they should come to Christ. And the holy Cyprian uses similar evidence against the same heathens; for, speaking of the magi, he says, "The chief of them, however, Hostanes, asserts both that the form of the true God cannot be seen, and also that true angels stand beside His seat. In which Plato also agrees in like manner, and, maintaining the existence of one God, he calls the others angels or demons. Hermes Trismegistus also speaks of one God, and confesses that He is incomprehensible, and past our powers of

estimation.” If, therefore, they were to come to the perception of salvation in Christ, it surely would not be said to them, This that ye have is bad, or false; but clearly it would deservedly be said, Though this in you is perfect and true, yet it would profit nothing unless ye came to the grace of Christ. If, therefore, anything that is holy can be found and rightly approved in the very heathens, although the salvation which is of Christ is not yet to be granted to them, we ought not, even though heretics are worse than they, to be moved to the desire of correcting what is bad in them belonging to themselves, without being willing to acknowledge what is good in them of Christ. But we will set forth from a fresh preface to consider the remaining judgments of this Council.



# Book VII

In which the remaining judgments of the Council of Carthage are examined.

## CHAPTER 1

1. Let us not be considered troublesome to our readers, if we discuss the same question often and from different points of view. For although the Holy Catholic Church throughout all nations be fortified by the authority of primitive custom and of a plenary Council against those arguments which throw some darkness over the question about baptism, whether it can be the same among heretics and schismatics that it is in the Catholic Church, yet, since a different opinion has at one time been entertained in the unity of the Church itself, by men who are in no wise to be despised, and especially by Cyprian, whose authority men endeavor to use against us who are far removed from his charity, we are therefore compelled to make use of the opportunity of examining and considering all that we find on this subject in his Council and letters, in order, as it were, to handle at some considerable length this same question, and to show how it has more truly been the decision of the whole body of the Catholic Church, that heretics or schismatics, who have received baptism already in the body from which they came, should be admitted with it into the communion of the Catholic Church, being corrected in their error and rooted and grounded in the faith, that, so far as concerns the sacrament of baptism, there should not be an addition of something that was wanting, but a turning to profit of what was in them. And the holy Cyprian indeed, now that the corruptible body no longer presseth down the soul, nor the earthly tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things, sees with greater clearness that truth to which his charity made him deserving to attain. May he therefore help us by his prayers, while we labor in the mortality of the flesh as in a darksome cloud, that if the Lord so grant it, we may imitate so far as we can the good

that was in him. But if he thought otherwise than right on any point, and persuaded certain of his brethren and colleagues to entertain his views in a matter which he now sees clearly through the revelation of Him whom he loved, let us, who are far inferior to his merits, yet following, as our weakness will allow, the authority of the Catholic Church of which he was himself a conspicuous and most noble member, strive our utmost against heretics and schismatics, seeing that they, being cut off from the unity which he maintained, and barren of the love with which he was fruitful, and fallen away from the humility in which he stood, are disavowed and condemned the more by him, in proportion as he knows that they wish to search out his writings for purposes of treachery, and are unwilling to imitate what he did for the maintainance of peace,—like those who, calling themselves Nazarene Christians, and circumcising the foreskin of their flesh after the fashion of the Jews, being heretics by birth in that error from which Peter, when straying from the truth, was called by Paul persist in the same to the present day. As therefore they have remained in their perversity cut off from the body of the Church, while Peter has been crowned in the primacy of the apostles through the glory of martyrdom, so these men, while Cyprian, through the abundance of his love, has been received into the portion of the saints through the brightness of his passion, are obliged to recognize themselves as exiles from unity, and, in defence of their calumnies, set up a citizen of unity as an opponent against the very home of unity. Let us, therefore, go on to examine the other judgments of that Council after the same fashion

## CHAPTER 2

2. Marcus of Mactaris said: “It is not to be wondered at if heretics, being enemies and opponents of the truth, claim to themselves what has been entrusted and vouchsafed to other men. What is marvellous is that some of us, traitors to the truth, uphold heretics and oppose Christians; therefore we decree that heretics should be baptized.”

3. To him we answer: It is indeed much more to be wondered at, and deserving of expressions of great praise, that Cyprian and his colleagues had such love for unity that they continued in unity with those whom they considered to be traitors to the truth, without any apprehension of being

polluted by them. For when Marcus said, "It is marvellous that some of us, traitors to the truth, uphold heretics and oppose Christians," it seemed natural that he should add, Therefore we decree that communion should not be held with them. This he did not say; but what he does say is, "Therefore we decree that heretics should be baptized," adhering to what the peaceful Cyprian had enjoined in the first instance, saying, "Judging no man, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain a different opinion." While, therefore, the Donatists calumniate us and call us traditors, I should be glad to know, supposing that any Jew or pagan were found, who, after reading the records of that Council should call both us and them, according to their own rules, traitors to the truth, how we should be able to make our joint defense so as to refute and wash away so grave a charge. They give the name of traditors to men whom they were never able in times past to convict of the offense, and whom they cannot now show to be involved in it, being themselves rather shown to be liable to the same charge. But what has this to do with us? What shall we say of them who, by their own showing, are unquestionably traitors? For if we, however falsely, are called traditors, because, as they allege, we took part in the same communion with traditors, we have all taken part with the traditors in question, seeing that in the time of the blessed Cyprian the party of Donatus had not yet separated itself from unity. For the delivery of the sacred books, from which they began to be called traditors, occurred somewhat more than forty years after his martyrdom. If, therefore, we are traditors, because we sprang from traditors, as they believe or pretend, we both of us derive our origin from those other traitors. For there is no room for saying that they did not communicate with these traitors, since they call them men of their own party. In the words of the Council which they are most forward to quote, "Some of us," it declares, "traitors to the truth, uphold heretics." To this is added the testimony of Cyprian, showing clearly that he remained in communion with them, when he says, "Judging no man, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain a different opinion." For those who entertained a different opinion were the very persons whom Marcus calls traitors to the truth because they upheld heretics, as he maintains, by receiving them into the Church without baptism. That it was, moreover, the custom that they should be so received, is testified both by Cyprian himself in many passages, and by some bishops in this Council. Whence it is

evident that, if heretics have not baptism, the Church of Christ of those days was full of traitors, who upheld them by receiving them in this way. I would urge, therefore, that we plead our cause in common against the charge of treason which they cannot disavow, and therein our special case will be argued against the charge of delivering the books, which they could not prove against us. But let us argue the point as though they had convicted us; and what we shall answer jointly to those who urge against both of us the general treason of our forefathers, that we will answer to these men who urge against us that our forefathers gave up the sacred books. For as we were dead because our forefathers delivered up the books, which caused them to divide themselves from us, so both we and they themselves are dead through the treason of our forefathers, from whom both we and they are sprung. But since they say they live, they hold that that treason does not in any way affect them, therefore neither are we affected by the delivery of the books. And it should be observed that, according to them, the treason is indisputable: while, according to us, there is no truth either in the former charge of treason, because we say that heretics also may have the baptism of Christ; nor in the latter charge of delivering the books, because in that they were themselves beaten. They have therefore no reason for separating themselves by the wicked sin of schism, because, if our forefathers were not guilty of delivering up the books, as we say, there is no charge which can affect us at all; but if they were guilty of the sin, as these men say, then it is just as far from affecting us as the sin of those other traitors is from affecting either us or them. And hence, since there is no charge that can implicate us from the unrighteousness of our forefathers, the charge arising against them from their own schism is manifestly proved.

### CHAPTER 3

4. Satus of Sicilibba said: "If heretics receive forgiveness of their sins in their own baptism, it is without reason that they come to the Church. For since it is for sins that men are punished in the day of judgment, heretics have nothing to fear in the judgment of Christ if they have obtained remission of their sins."

5. This too might also have been our own judgment; but let its author beware in what spirit it was said. For it is expressed in terms of such import,

that I should feel no compunction in consenting and subscribing to it in the same spirit in which I too believe that heretics may indeed have the baptism of Christ, but cannot have the remission of their sins. But he does not say, If heretics baptize or are baptized, but “If heretics,” he says, “receive forgiveness of their sins in their own baptism, it is without reason that they come to the Church.” For if we were to set in the place of heretics those whom Cyprian knew within the Church as “renouncing the world in words alone and not in deeds,” we also might express this same judgment, in just so many words, with the most perfect truth. If those who only seem to be converted receive forgiveness of their sins in their own baptism, it is without reason that they are afterwards led on to a true conversion. For since it is for sins that men are punished in the day of judgment, “those who renounce the world in words and not in deeds” have nothing to fear in the judgment of Christ if they have obtained remission of their sins. But this reasoning is only made perfect by some such context as is formed by the addition of the words. But they ought to fear the judgment of Christ, and to lose no time in being converted in the truth of their hearts; and, when they have done this, it is certainly not necessary that they should be baptized a second time. It was possible, therefore, for them to receive baptism, and either not to receive remission of their sins, or to be burdened again at once with the load of sins which were forgiven them; and so the same is the case also with the heretics.

#### CHAPTER 4

6. Victor of Gor said: “Seeing that sins are forgiven only in the baptism of the Church, he who admits heretics to communion without baptism is guilty of two errors contrary to reason; for, on the one hand, he does not cleanse the heretics, and, on the other, he defiles the Christians.”

7. To this we answer that the baptism of the Church exists even among heretics, though they themselves are not within the Church; just as the water of Paradise was found in the land of Egypt, though that land was not itself in Paradise. We do not therefore admit heretics to communion without baptism; and since they come with their waywardness corrected, we receive not their sins, but the sacraments of Christ. And, in respect of the remission of their sins, we say again here exactly what we said above. And certainly,

in regard of what he says at the end of his judgment, declaring that he “is guilty of two errors contrary to reason, seeing that on the one hand he does not cleanse the heretics, and on the other he defiles the Christians,” Cyprian himself is the first and the most earnest in repudiating this with the colleagues who agreed with him. For neither did he think that he was defiled, when, on account of the bond of peace, he decreed that it was right to hold communion with such men, when he used the words, “Judging no one, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain a different opinion.” Or, if heretics defile the Church by being admitted to communion without being baptized, then the whole Church has been defiled in virtue of that custom which has been so often recorded here. And just as those men call us traditors because of our forefathers, in whom they were able to prove nothing of the sort when they laid the charge against them, so, if every man partakes of the character of those with whom he may have held communion, all were then made heretics. And if every one who asserts this is mad, it must be false that Victor says, when he declares that “he who admits heretics to communion without baptism, not only fails to cleanse the heretics, but pollutes the Christians as well.” Or if this be true, they were then not admitted without baptism, but those men had the baptism of Christ, although it was given and received among heretics, who were so admitted in accordance with that custom which these very men acknowledged to exist; and on the same grounds they are even now rightly admitted in the same manner.

## CHAPTER 5

8. Aurelius of Utica said: “Since the apostle says that we ought not to be partakers with the sins of other men, what else does he do but make himself partaker with the sins of other men, who holds communion with heretics without the baptism of the Church? And therefore I pronounce my judgment that heretics should be baptized, that they may receive remission of their sins, and so communion be allowed to them.”

9. The answer is: Therefore Cyprian and all those bishops were partakers in the sins of other men, inasmuch as they remained in communion with such men, when they removed no one from the right of communion who entertained a different opinion. Where, then, is the Church? Then, to say

nothing for the moment of heretics,—since the words of this judgment are applicable also to other sinners, such as Cyprian saw with lamentation to be in the Church with him, whom, while he confuted them, he yet tolerated,—where is the Church, which, according to these words must be held to have perished from that very moment by the contagion of their sins? But if, as is the most firmly established truth, the Church both has remained and does remain, the partaking of the sins of others, which is forbidden by the apostle, must be considered only to consist in consenting to them. But let heretics be baptized again, that they may receive remission of their sins, if the wayward and the envious are baptized again, who, seeing that “they renounced the world in words and not in deeds,” were indeed able to receive baptism, but did not obtain remission of their sins, as the Lord says, “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

#### CHAPTER 6

10. Iambus of Germanicana said: “Those who approve the baptism of heretics disapprove ours, so as to deny that such as are, I will not say washed, but defiled outside the Church, ought to be baptized within the Church.”

11. To him we answer, that none of our party approves the baptism of heretics, but all the baptism of Christ, even though it be found in heretics who are as it were chaff outside the Church, as it may be found in other unrighteous men who are as chaff within the Church. For if those who are baptized without the Church are not washed, but defiled, assuredly those who are baptized outside the rock on which the Church is built are not washed, but defiled. But all are without the said rock who hear the words of Christ and do them not. Or if it be the case that they are washed indeed in baptism, but yet continue in the defilement of their unrighteousness, from which they were unwilling to be changed for the better, the same is true also of the heretics.

#### CHAPTER 7

12. Lucianus of Rucuma said: “It is written, And God saw the light that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness.’ If light and darkness can agree, then can there be something in common between us and heretics. Therefore I give my judgment that heretics should be baptized.”

13. To him the answer is: If light and darkness can agree, then can there be something common between the righteous and unrighteous. Let him therefore declare his judgment that those unrighteous should be baptized afresh whom Cyprian confuted within the Church itself; or let him who can say if those are not unrighteous “who renounce the world in words and not in deeds.”

#### CHAPTER 8

14. Pelagianus of Luperciana said: “It is written, Either the Lord is God, or Baal is God.’ So now either the Church is the Church, or heresy is the Church. Further, if heresy be not the Church, how can the baptism of the Church exist among heretics?”

15. To him we may answer as follows: Either Paradise is Paradise, or Egypt is Paradise. Further, if Egypt be not Paradise, how can the water of Paradise be in Egypt? But it will be said to us that it extends even thither by flowing forth from Paradise. In like manner, therefore, baptism extends to heretics. Also we say: Either the rock is the Church, or the sand is the Church. Further, since the sand is not the Church, how can baptism exist with those who build upon the sand by hearing the words of Christ and doing them not? And yet it does exist with them; and in like manner also it exists among the heretics.

#### CHAPTER 9

16. Jader of Midila said: “We know that there is but one baptism in the Catholic Church, and therefore we ought not to admit a heretic unless he has been baptized in our body, lest he should think that he has been baptized outside the Catholic Church.”

17. To him our answer is, that if this were said of those unrighteous men who are outside the rock, it certainly would be falsely said. And so it is



therefore also in the case of heretics.

#### CHAPTER 10

18. Likewise another Felix of Marazana said: “There is one faith, one baptism, but of the Catholic Church, to which alone is given authority to baptize.”

19. What if another were to say as follows: One faith, one baptism, but of the righteous only, to whom alone authority is given to baptize? As these words might be refuted, so also may the judgment of Felix be refuted. Do even the unrighteous who are not changed in heart in baptism, while “they renounce the world in words and not in deeds” yet belong to the members of the Church? Let them consider whether such a Church is the actual rock, the very dove, the bride herself without spot or wrinkle.

#### CHAPTER 11

20. Paul of Bobba said: “I for my part am not moved if some fail to uphold the faith and truth of the Church, seeing that the apostle says For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea let God be true, but every man a liar.’ But if God be true, how can the truth of baptism be in the company of heretics, where God is not?”

21. To him we answer: What is God among the covetous? And yet baptism exists among them; and so also it exists among heretics. For they among whom God is, are the temple of God. “But what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” Further, Paul considers, and Cyprian agrees with him, that covetousness is idolatry; and Cyprian himself again associates with his colleagues, who were robbers, but yet baptized, with great reward of toleration.

#### CHAPTER 12

22. Pomponius of Dionysiana said: “It is manifest that heretics cannot baptize and give remission of sins, seeing that no power is given to them that they should be able either to loose or bind anything on earth.”

23. The answer is: This power is not given to murderers either, that is, to those who hate their brothers. For it was not said to such as these, “whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” And yet they baptize, and both Paul tolerates them in the same communion of baptism, and Cyprian acknowledges them.

#### CHAPTER 13

24. Venantius of Tinisa said: “If a husband, going on a journey into foreign countries, had entrusted the guardianship of his wife to a friend, he would surely keep her that was entrusted to his care with the utmost diligence, that her chastity and holiness might not be defiled by any one. Christ our Lord and God, when going to the Father, committed His bride to our care: do we keep her uncorrupt and undefiled, or do we betray her purity and chastity to adulterers and corrupters? For he who makes the baptism of Christ common with heretics betrays the bride of Christ to adulterers.”

25. We answer: What of those who, when they are baptized, turn themselves to the Lord with their lips and not with their heart? do not they possess an adulterous mind? Are not they themselves lovers of the world, which they renounce in words and not in deeds; and they corrupt good manners through evil communications, saying, “Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die?” Did not the discourse of the apostle take heed even against such as these, when he says, “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds [also] should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ?” When, therefore, Cyprian held the baptism of Christ to be in common with such men, did he therefore betray the bride of Christ into the hands of adulterers, or did he not rather recognize the necklace of the Bridegroom even on an adulteress?

#### CHAPTER 14

26. Aymnius of Ausuaga said: “We have received one baptism, which same also we administer; but he who says that authority is given to heretics also to baptize, the same makes two baptisms.”

27. To him we answer: Why does not he also make two baptisms who maintains that the unrighteous also can baptize? For although the righteous and unrighteous are in themselves opposed to one another, yet the baptism which the righteous give, such as was Paul, or such as was also Cyprian, is not contrary to the baptism which those unrighteous men were wont to give who hated Paul, whom Cyprian understands to have been not heretics, but bad Catholics; and although the moderation which was found in Cyprian, and the covetousness which was found in his colleagues, are in themselves opposed to one another, yet the baptism which Cyprian used to give was not contrary to the baptism which his colleagues who opposed him used to give, but one and the same with it, because in both cases it is He that baptizes of whom it is said, “The same is He which baptizeth.”

#### CHAPTER 15

28. Saturninus of Victoriana said: “If heretics may baptize, they are excused and defended in doing unlawful things; nor do I see why either Christ called them His adversaries, or the apostle called them antichrists.”

29. To him we answer: We say that heretics have no authority to baptize in the same sense in which we say that defrauders have no authority to baptize. For not only to the heretic, but to the sinner, God says, “What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?” To the same person He assuredly says, “When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him.” How much worse, therefore, are those who did not consent with thieves, but themselves were wont to plunder farms with treacherous deceits? Yet Cyprian did not consent with them, though he did tolerate them in the corn-field of the Catholic Church, lest the wheat should be rooted out together with it. And yet at the same time the baptism which they themselves conferred was the very selfsame baptism, because it was not of them, but of Christ. As therefore they, although the baptism of Christ be recognized in them, were yet not excused and defended in doing unlawful things, and Christ rightly called those His adversaries who were destined, by persevering in such things, to hear the doom, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity,” whence also they are called antichrists, because they are contrary to Christ while they live in opposition to His words, so likewise is it the case with heretics.

## CHAPTER 16

30. Another Saturninus of Tucca said: “The Gentiles, although they worship idols, yet acknowledge and confess the supreme God, the Father and Creator. Against Him Marcion blasphemes, and some men do not blush to approve the baptism of Marcion. How do such priests either maintain or vindicate the priesthood of God, who do not baptize the enemies of God, and hold communion with them while they are thus unbaptized?”

31. The answer is this: Truly when such terms as this are used, all moderation is passed; nor do they take into consideration that even they themselves hold communion with such men, “judging no one, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain a contrary opinion.” But Saturninus has used an argument in this very judgment of his, which might furnish materials for his admonition (if he would pay attention to it), that in each man what is wrong should be corrected, and what is right should be approved, since he says, “The Gentiles, although they worship idols, yet acknowledge and confess the supreme God, the Father and Creator.” If, then, any Gentile of such a kind should come to God, would he wish to correct and change this point in him, that he acknowledged and confessed God the Father and Creator? I trow not. But he would amend in him his idolatry, which was an evil in him; and he would give to him the sacraments of Christ, which he did not possess; and anything that was wayward which he found in him he would correct; and anything which had been wanting he would supply. So also in the Marcionist heretic he would acknowledge the perfectness of baptism, he would correct his waywardness, he would teach him Catholic truth.

## CHAPTER 17

32. Marcellus of Zama said: “Since sins are remitted only in the baptism of the Church, he who does not baptize a heretic holds communion with a sinner.”

33. What, does he who holds communion with one who does this not hold communion with a sinner? But what else did all of them do, “in judging no one, or removing from the right of communion any one who entertained a different opinion”? Where, then, is the Church? Are those things not an

obstacle to those who are patient, and tolerate the tares lest the wheat should be rooted out together with them? I would have them therefore say, who have committed the sacrilege of schism by separating themselves from the whole world, how it comes that they have in their mouths the judgment of Cyprian, while they do not have in their hearts the patience of Cyprian. But to this Marcellus we have an answer in what has been said above concerning baptism and the remission of sins, explaining how there can be baptism in a man although there be in him no remission of his sins.

#### CHAPTER 18

34. Irenaeus of Ululi said: “If the Church does not baptize a heretic, because it is said that he has been baptized already, then heresy is the greater.”

35. The answer is: On the same principle it might be said, If therefore the Church does not baptize the covetous man, because it is said that he has been baptized already, then covetousness is the greater. But this is false, therefore the other is also false.

#### CHAPTER 19

36. Donatus of Cibaliana said: “I acknowledge one Church, and one baptism that appertains thereto. If there is any one who says that the grace of baptism exists among heretics, he must first show and prove that the Church exists with them.”

37. To him we answer: If you say that the grace of baptism is identical with baptism, then it exists among heretics; but if baptism is the sacrament or outward sign of grace, while the grace itself is the abolition of sins, then the grace of baptism does not exist with heretics. But so there is one baptism and one Church, just as there is one faith. As therefore the good and bad, not having one hope, can yet have one baptism, so those who have not one common Church can have one common baptism.

#### CHAPTER 20

38. Zozimus of Tharassa said: “When a revelation has been made of the truth, error must give way to truth; inasmuch as Peter also, who before was

wont to circumcise, gave way to Paul when he declared the truth.”

39. The answer is: This may also be considered as the expression of our judgment too, and this is just what has been done in respect of this question of baptism. For after that the truth had been more clearly revealed, error gave way to truth, when that most wholesome custom was further confirmed by the authority of a plenary Council. It is well, however, that they so constantly bear in mind that it was possible even for Peter, the chief of the apostles, to have been at one time minded otherwise than the truth required; which we believe, without any disrespect to Cyprian, to have been the case with him, and that with all our love for Cyprian, for it is not right that he should be loved with greater love than Peter.

#### CHAPTER 21

40. Julianus of Telepte said: “It is written, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven;’ if heresy is from heaven, it can give baptism.”

41. Let him hear another also saying: If covetousness is from heaven, it can give baptism. And yet the covetous do confer it; so therefore also may the heretics.

#### CHAPTER 22

42. Faustus of Timida Regia said: “Let not these persons flatter themselves who favor heretics. He who interferes with the baptism of the Church on behalf of heretics makes them Christians, and us heretics.”

43. To him we answer: If any one were to say that a man who, when he received baptism had not received remission of his sins, because he entertained hatred towards his brother in his heart, was nevertheless not to be baptized again when he dismissed that hatred from his heart, does such a man interfere with the baptism of the Church on behalf of murderers, or does he make them righteous and us murderers? Let him therefore understand the same also in the case of heretics.

#### CHAPTER 23

44. Geminius of Furni said: “Certain of our colleagues may prefer heretics to themselves, they cannot prefer them to us: and therefore what we have once decreed we hold, that we should baptize those who come to us from heretics.”

45. This man also acknowledges most openly that certain of his colleagues entertained opinions contrary to his own: whence again and again the love of unity is confirmed, because they were separated from one another by no schism, till God should reveal to one or other of them anything wherein they were otherwise minded. But to him our answer is, that his colleagues did not prefer heretics to themselves, but that, as the baptism of Christ is acknowledged in the covetous, in the fraudulent, in robbers, in murderers, so also they acknowledged it in heretics.

#### CHAPTER 24

46. Rogatianus of Nova said: “Christ established the Church, the devil heresy: how can the synagogue of Satan have the baptism of Christ?”

47. To him our answer is: Is it true that because Christ established the well-affectioned, and the devil the envious, therefore the party of the devil, which is proved to be among the envious, cannot have the baptism of Christ?

#### CHAPTER 25

48. Therapius of Bulla said: “If a man gives up and betrays the baptism of Christ to heretics, what else can he be said to be but a Judas to the Bride of Christ?”

49. How great a condemnation have we here of all schismatics, who have separated themselves by wicked sacrilege from the inheritance of Christ dispersed throughout the whole world, if Cyprian held communion with such as was the traitor Judas, and yet was not defiled by them; or if he was defiled, then were all made such as Judas; or if they were not, then the evil deeds of those who went before do not belong to those who came after even though they were the offspring of the same communion. Why, therefore, do they cast in our teeth the traditores, against whom they did not prove their

charge, and do not cast in their own teeth Judas, with whom Cyprian and his colleagues held communion? Behold the Council in which these men are wont to boast! We indeed say, that he who approves the baptism of Christ even in heretics, does not betray to heretics the baptism of Christ; just in the same way as he does not betray to murderers the baptism of Christ who approves the baptism of Christ even in murderers: but inasmuch as they profess to prescribe to us from the decrees of this Council what opinions we ought to hold, let them first assent to it themselves. See how therein were compared to the traitor Judas, all who said that heretics, although baptized in heresy, should not be baptized again. Yet with such Cyprian was willing to hold communion, when he said, “Judging no man, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he entertain a contrary opinion.” But that there had been men of such a sort in former times within the Church, is made clear by the sentence in which he says: “But some one will say, What, then, shall be done with these men who in times past were admitted into the Church without baptism?” That such had been the custom of the Church, is testified again and again by the very men who compose this Council. If, therefore, any one who does this “can be said to be nothing else but a Judas to the Bride of Christ,” according to the terms in which the judgment of Therapius is couched; but Judas, according to the teaching of the gospel, was a traitor; then all those men held communion with traitors who at that time uttered those very judgments, and before they uttered them they all had become traitors through that custom which at that time was retained by the Church. All, therefore—that is to say, both we and they themselves who were the offspring of that unity—are traitors. But we defend ourselves in two ways: first, because without prejudice to the right of unity, as Cyprian himself declared in his opening speech, we do not assent to the decrees of this Council in which this judgment was pronounced; and secondly, because we hold that the wicked in no way hurt the good in Catholic unity, until at the last the chaff be separated from the wheat. But our opponents, inasmuch as they both shelter themselves as it were under the decrees of this Council, and maintain that the good perish as by a kind of infection from communion with the wicked, have no resource to save them from allowing both that the earlier Christians, whose offspring they are, were traitors, inasmuch as they are convicted by their own Council; and that the deeds of those who went



before them do reflect on them, since they throw in our teeth the deeds of our ancestors.

#### CHAPTER 26

50. Also another Lucius of Membresa said: “It is written, God heareth not sinners.’ How can he who is a sinner be heard in baptism?”

51. We answer: How is the covetous man heard, or the robber, and usurer, and murderer? Are they not sinners? And yet Cyprian, while he finds fault with them in the Catholic Church, yet tolerates them.

#### CHAPTER 27

52. Also another Felix of Buslaceni said: “In admitting heretics to the Church without baptism, let no one place custom before reason and truth; for reason and truth always exclude custom.”

53. To him our answer is: You do not show the truth; you confess the existence of the custom. We should therefore do right in maintaining the custom which has since been confirmed by a plenary Council, even if the truth were still concealed, which we believe to have been already made manifest.

#### CHAPTER 28

54. Another Saturninus of Abitini said: “If Antichrist can give to any one the grace of Christ, then can heretics also baptize, who are called Antichrists.”

55. What if another were to say, If a murderer can give the grace of Christ, then can they also baptize that hate their brethren who are called murderers? For certainly he would seem in a way to speak the truth, and yet they can baptize; in like manner, therefore, can the heretics as well.

#### CHAPTER 29

56. Quintus of Aggya said: “He who has a thing can give it; but what can the heretics give, who are well known to have nothing?”

57. To him our answer is: If, then, any man can give a thing who has it, it is clear that heretics can give baptism: for when they separate from the Church, they have still the sacrament of washing which they had received while in the Church; for when they return they do not again receive it, because they had not lost it when they withdrew from the Church.

#### CHAPTER 30

58. Another Julianus of Marcelliana said: “If a man can serve two masters, God and mammon, then baptism also can serve two, the Christian and the heretic.”

59. Truly, if it can serve the self-restrained and the covetous man, the sober and the drunken, the well-affectioned and the murderer, why should it not also serve the Christian and the heretic?—whom, indeed, it does not really serve; but it ministers to them, and is administered by them, for salvation to those who use it right, and for judgment to such as use it wrong.

#### CHAPTER 31

60. Tenax of Horrea Celiae said: “There is one baptism, but of the Church; and where the Church is not, there baptism also cannot be.”

61. To him we answer: How then comes it that it may be where the rock is not, but only sand; seeing that the Church is on the rock, and not on sand?

#### CHAPTER 32

62. Another Victor of Assuras said: “It is written, that there is one God and one Christ, one Church and one baptism.’ How then can any one baptize in a place where there is not either God, or Christ, or the Church?”

63. How can any one baptize either in that sand, where the Church is not, seeing that it is on the rock; nor God and Christ, seeing that there is not there the temple of God and Christ?

#### CHAPTER 33

64. Donatulus of Capse said: “I also have always entertained this opinion, that heretics, who have gained nothing outside the Church, should be baptized when they are converted to the Church.”

65. To this the answer is: They have, indeed, gained nothing outside the Church, but that is nothing towards salvation, not nothing towards the sacrament. For salvation is peculiar to the good; but the sacraments are common to the good and bad alike.

#### CHAPTER 34

66. Verulus of Rusiccade said: “A man that is a heretic cannot give that which he has not; much more is this the case with a schismatic, who has lost what he had.”

67. We have already shown that they still have it, because they do not lose it when they separate themselves. For they do not receive it again when they return: wherefore, if it was thought that they could not give it because they were supposed not to have it, let it now be understood that they can give it, because it is understood that they also have it.

#### CHAPTER 35

68. Pudentianus of Cuiculi said: “My recent ordination to the episcopate induced me, brethren, to wait and hear what my elders would decide. For it is plain that heresies have and can have nothing; and so, if any come from them, it is determined righteously that they should be baptized.”

69. As, therefore, we have already answered those who went before, for whose judgment this man was waiting, so be it understood that we have answered himself.

#### CHAPTER 36

70. Peter of Hippo Diarrhytus said: “Since there is one baptism in the Catholic Church, it is clear that a man cannot be baptized outside the Church; and therefore I give my judgment, that those who have been bathed in heresy or in schism ought to be baptized on coming to the Church.”

71. There is one baptism in the Catholic Church, in such a sense that, when any have gone out from it, it does not become two in those who go out, but remains one and the same. What, therefore, is recognized in those who return, should also be recognized in those who received it from men who have separated themselves, since they did not lose it when they went apart into heresy.

#### CHAPTER 37

72. Likewise another Lucius of Ausafa said: “According to the motion of my mind and of the Holy Spirit, since there is one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one Christ, and one hope, one Spirit, one Church, there ought also to be only one baptism. And therefore I say, both that if anything has been set on foot or done among the heretics, that it ought to be rescinded; and also, that they who come out from among the heretics should be baptized in the Church.”

73. Let it therefore be pronounced of no effect that they baptize, who hear the words of God and do them not, when they shall begin to pass from unrighteousness to righteousness, that is, from the sand to the rock. And if this is not done, because what there was in them of Christ was not violated by their unrighteousness, then let this also be understood in the case of heretics: for neither is there the same hope in the unrighteous, so long as they are on the sand, as there is in those who are upon the rock; and yet there is in both the same baptism, although as it is said that there is one hope, so also is it said that there is one baptism.

#### CHAPTER 38

74. Felix of Gurgites said: “I give my judgment, that, according to the precepts of the holy Scriptures, those who have been unlawfully baptized outside the Church by heretics, if they wish to flee to the Church, should obtain the grace of baptism where it is lawfully given.”

75. Our answer is: Let them indeed begin to have in a lawful manner to salvation what they before had unlawfully to destruction; because each man is justified under the same baptism, when he has turned himself to God with

a true heart, as that under which he was condemned, when on receiving it he “renounced the world in words alone, and not in deeds.”

#### CHAPTER 39

76. Pusillus of Lamasba said: “I believe that baptism is not unto salvation except within the Catholic Church. Whatsoever is without the Catholic Church is mere pretense.”

77. This indeed is true, that “baptism is not unto salvation except within the Catholic Church.” For in itself it can indeed exist outside the Catholic Church as well; but there it is not unto salvation, because there it does not work salvation; just as that sweet savor of Christ is certainly not unto salvation in them that perish, though from a fault not in itself, but in them. But “whatsoever is without the Catholic Church is mere pretense,” yet only in so far as it is not Catholic. But there may be something Catholic outside the Catholic Church, just as the name of Christ could exist outside the congregation of Christ, in which name he who did not follow with the disciples was casting out devils. For there may be pretense also within the Catholic Church, as is unquestionable in the case of those “who renounce the world in words and not in deeds,” and yet the pretense is not Catholic. As, therefore, there is in the Catholic Church something which is not Catholic, so there may be something which is Catholic outside the Catholic Church.

#### CHAPTER 40

78. Salvianus of Gazaufala said: “It is generally known that heretics have nothing; and therefore they come to us, that they may receive what previously they did not have.”

79. Our answer is: On this theory, the very men who founded heresies are not heretics themselves, because they separated themselves from the Church, and certainly they previously had what they received there. But if it is absurd to say that those are not heretics through whom the rest became heretics, it is therefore possible that a heretic should have what turns to his destruction through his evil use of it.

#### CHAPTER 41

80. Honoratus of Tucca said: “Since Christ is the truth, we ought to follow the truth rather than custom; that we may sanctify by the baptism of the Church the heretics who come to us, simply because they could receive nothing outside.”

81. This man, too, is a witness to the custom, in which he gives us the greatest assistance, whatever else he may appear to say against us. But this is not the reason why heretics come over to us, because they have received nothing outside, but that what they did receive may begin to be of use to them: for this it could not be outside in any wise.

#### CHAPTER 42

82. Victor of Octavus said: “As ye yourselves also know, I have not been long appointed a bishop, and therefore I waited for the counsel of my seniors. This therefore I express as my opinion, that whosoever comes from heresy should undoubtedly be baptized.”

83. What, therefore, has been answered to those for whom he waited, may be taken as the answer also to himself.

#### CHAPTER 43

84. Clarus of Mascula said: “The sentence of our Lord Jesus Christ is manifest, when He sent forth His apostles, and gave the power which had been given Him of His Father to them alone, whose successors we are, governing the Church of the Lord with the same power, and baptizing those who believe the faith. And therefore heretics, who, being without, have neither power nor the Church of Christ, cannot baptize any one with His baptism.”

85. Are, then, ill-affectioned murderers successors of the apostles? Why, then, do they baptize? Is it because they are not outside? But they are outside the rock, to which the Lord gave the keys, and on which He said that He would build His Church.

#### CHAPTER 44

86. Secundianus of Thambei said: “We ought not to deceive heretics by our too great forwardness, that not having been baptized in the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and having therefore not received remission of their sins, they may not impute to us, when the day of judgment comes, that we have been the cause of their not being baptized, and not having obtained the indulgence of the grace of God. On which account, since there is one Church and one baptism, when they are converted to us, let them receive together with the Church the baptism also of the Church.”

87. Nay, when they are transferred to the rock, and joined to the society of the Dove, let them receive the remission of their sins, which they could not have outside the rock and outside the Dove, whether they were openly without, like the heretics, or apparently within, like the abandoned Catholics; of whom, however, it is clear that they both have and confer baptism without remission of sins, when even from themselves it is received by men, who, being not changed for the better, honor God with their lips, while their heart is far from Him. Yet it is true that there is one baptism, just as there is one Dove, though those who are not in the one communion of the Dove may yet have baptism in common.

#### CHAPTER 45

88. Also another Aurelius of Chullabi said: “The Apostle John has laid down in his epistle the following precept: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.’ How can such men be admitted without consideration into the house of God, who are forbidden to be admitted into our private house? Or how can we hold communion with them without the baptism of Christ, when, if we only so much as bid them God speed, we are partakers of their evil deeds?”

89. In respect of this testimony of John there is no need of further disputation, since it has no reference at all to the question of baptism, which we are at present discussing. For he says, “If any come unto you, and bring not the doctrine of Christ.” But heretics leaving the doctrine of their error are converted to the doctrine of Christ, that they may be incorporated with the Church, and may begin to belong to the members of that Dove whose

sacrament they previously had; and therefore what previously they lacked belonging to it is given to them, that is to say, peace and charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. But what they previously had belonging to the Dove is acknowledged, and received without any depreciation; just as in the adulteress God recognises His gifts, even when she is following her lovers; because when after her fornication is corrected she is turned again to chastity, those gifts are not laid to her charge, but she herself is corrected. But just as Cyprian might have defended himself if this testimony of John had been cast in his teeth whilst he was holding communion with men like these, so let those against whom it is spoken make their own defense. For to the question before us, as I said before, it has no reference at all. For John says that we are not to bid God speed to men of strange doctrine; but Paul the apostle says, with even greater vehemence, “If any man that is called a brother be covetous, or a drunkard,” or anything of the sort, with such an one no not to eat; and yet Cyprian used to admit to fellowship, not with his private table, but with the altar of God, his colleagues who were usurers, and treacherous, and fraudulent, and robbers. But in what manner this may be defended has been sufficiently set forth in other books already.

#### CHAPTER 46

90. Litteus of Gemelli said: “If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.’ Since, therefore, it is clear that heretics can give no light to any one, as being blind themselves, therefore their baptism is invalid.”

91. Neither do we say that it is valid for salvation so long as they are heretics, just as it is of no value to those murderers of whom we spoke, so long as they hate their brethren: for they also themselves are in darkness, and if any one follows them they fall together into the ditch; and yet it does not follow that they either have not baptism or are unable to confer it.

#### CHAPTER 47

92. Natalis of Oea said: “It is not only I myself who am present, but also Pompeius of Sabrati, and Dioga of Leptis Magna, who commissioned me to represent their views, being absent indeed in body, but present in spirit, who



deliver this same judgment as our colleagues, that heretics cannot have communion with us, unless they have been baptized with the baptism of the Church.”

93. He means, I suppose, that communion which belongs to the society of the Dove; for in the partaking of the sacraments they doubtless held communion with them, judging no man, nor removing any from the right of communion if he held a different opinion. But with whatever reference he spoke, there is no great need for these words being refuted. For certainly a heretic would not be admitted to communion, unless he had been baptized with the baptism of the Church. But it is clear that the baptism of the Church exists even among heretics if it be consecrated with the words of the gospel; just as the gospel itself belongs to the Church, and has nothing to do with their waywardness, but certainly retains its own holiness.

#### CHAPTER 48

94. Junius of Neapolis said: “I do not depart from the judgment which we once pronounced, that we should baptize heretics on their coming to the Church.”

95. Since this man has adduced no argument nor proof from the Scriptures, he need not detain us long.

#### CHAPTER 49

96. Cyprian of Carthage said: “My opinion has been set forth with the greatest fullness in the letter which has been written to our colleague Jubaianus, that heretics being called enemies of Christ and antichrists according to the testimony of the gospel and the apostles, should, when they come to the Church, be baptized with the one baptism of the Church, that from enemies they may be made friends, and that from antichrists they may be made Christians.”

97. What need is there of further disputation here, seeing that we have already handled with the utmost care that very epistle to Jubaianus of which he has made mention? And as to what he has said here, let us not forget that it might be said of all unrighteous men who, as he himself bears witness,

are in the Catholic Church, and whose power of possessing and of conferring baptism is not questioned by any of us. For they come to the Church, who pass to Christ from the party of the devil, and build upon the rock, and are incorporated with the Dove, and are placed in security in the garden enclosed and fountain sealed; where none of those are found who live contrary to the precepts of Christ, wherever they may seem to be. For in the epistle which he wrote to Magnus, while discussing this very question, he himself warned us at sufficient length, and in no ambiguous terms, of what kind of society we should understand that the Church consists. For he says, in speaking of a certain man, “Let him become an alien and profane, an enemy to the peace and unity of the Lord, not dwelling in the house of God, that is to say, in the Church of Christ, in which none dwell save those who are of one heart and of one mind.” Let those, therefore, who would lay injunctions on us on the authority of Cyprian, pay attention for a time to what we here say. For if only those who are of one heart and of one mind dwell in the Church of Christ, beyond all question those were not dwelling in the Church of Christ, however much they might appear to be within, who of envy and contention were announcing Christ without charity; by whom he understands, not the heretics and schismatics who are mentioned by the Apostle Paul, but false brethren holding conversation with him within, who certainly ought not to have baptized, because they were not dwelling in the Church, in which he himself says that none dwell save those who are of one heart and of one mind: unless, indeed, any one be so far removed from the truth as to say that those were of one heart and of one mind who were envious and malevolent, and contentious without charity; and yet they used to baptize: nor did the detestable waywardness which they displayed in any degree violate or diminish from the sacrament of Christ, which was handled and dispensed by them.

#### CHAPTER 50

98. It is indeed worth while to consider the whole of the passage in the aforesaid letter to Magnus, which he has put together as follows: “Not dwelling,” he says, “in the house of God—that is to say, in the Church of Christ—in which none dwell save those that are of one heart and of one

mind, as the Holy Spirit says in the Psalms, speaking of God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house.’ Finally, the very sacrifices of the Lord declare that Christians are united among themselves by a firm and inseparable love for one another. For when the Lord calls bread, which is compacted together by the union of many grains, His body, He is signifying one people, whom He bore, compacted into one body; and when He calls wine, which is pressed out from a multitude of branches and clusters and brought together into one, His blood, He also signifies one flock joined together by the mingling of a multitude united into one.” These words of the blessed Cyprian show that he both understood and loved the glory of the house of God, which house he asserted to consist of those who are of one heart and of one mind, proving it by the testimony of the prophets and the meaning of the sacraments, and in which house certainly were not found those envious persons, those malevolent without charity, who nevertheless used to baptize. From whence it is clear that the sacrament of Christ can both be in and be administered by those who are not in the Church of Christ, in which Cyprian himself bears witness that there are none dwelling save those who are of one heart and of one mind. Nor can it indeed be said that they are allowed to baptize so long as they are undetected, seeing that the Apostle Paul did not fail to detect those of whose ministry he bears unquestionable testimony in his epistle, saying that he rejoices that they also were proclaiming Christ. For he says of them, “Whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”

#### CHAPTER 51

99. Taking all these things, therefore, into consideration, I think that I am not rash in saying that there are some in the house of God after such a fashion as not to be themselves the very house of God, which is said to be built upon a rock, which is called the one dove, which is styled the beauteous bride without spot or wrinkle, and a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed, a well of living water, an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits; which house also received the keys, and the power of binding and loosing. If any one shall neglect this house when it arrests and corrects him, the Lord says, “Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” Of this house it is said, “Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and

the place where Thine honor dwelleth;" and, "He maketh men to be of one mind in an house;" and, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord;" and, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, O Lord; they will be still praising Thee;" with countless other passages to the same effect. This house is also called wheat, bringing forth fruit with patience, some thirty-fold, some sixtyfold, and some an hundredfold. This house is also in vessels of gold and of silver, and in precious stones and imperishable woods. To this house it is said, "Forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" and, "For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." For this house is composed of those that are good and faithful, and of the holy servants of God dispersed throughout the world, and bound together by the unity of the Spirit, whether they know each other personally or not. But we hold that others are said to be in the house after such a sort, that they belong not to the substance of the house, nor to the society of fruitful and peaceful justice, but only as the chaff is said to be among the corn; for that they are in the house we cannot deny, when the apostle says, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." Of this countless multitude are found to be not only the crowd which within the Church afflicts the hearts of the saints, who are so few in comparison with so vast a host, but also the heresies and schisms which exist in those who have burst the meshes of the net, and may now be said to be rather out of the house than in the house, of whom it is said, "They went out from us, but they were not of us." For they are more thoroughly separated, now that they are also divided from us in the body, than are those who live within the Church in a carnal and worldly fashion, and are separated from us in the spirit

## CHAPTER 52

100. Of all these several classes, then, no one doubts respecting those first, who are in the house of God in such a sense as themselves to be the house of God, whether they be already spiritual, or as yet only babes nurtured with milk, but still making progress with earnestness of heart, towards that which is spiritual, that such men both have baptism so as to be of profit to themselves, and transmit it to those who follow their example so as to

benefit them; but that in its transmission to those who are false, whom the Holy Spirit shuns, though they themselves, so far as lies with them, confer it so as to be of profit, yet the others receive it in vain, since they do not imitate those from whom they receive it. But they who are in the great house after the fashion of vessels to dishonor, both have baptism without profit to themselves, and transmit it without profit to those who follow their example: those, however, receive it with profit, who are united in heart and character, not to their ministers, but to the holy house of God. But those who are more thoroughly separated, so as to be rather out of the house than in the house, have baptism without any profit to themselves; and, moreover, there is no profit to those who receive it from them, unless they be compelled by urgent necessity to receive it, and their heart in receiving it does not depart from the bond of unity: yet nevertheless they possess it, though the possession be of no avail; and it is received from them, even when it is of no profit to those who so receive it, though, in order that it may become of use, they must depart from their heresy or schism, and cleave to that house of God. And this ought to be done, not only by heretics and schismatics, but also by those who are in the house through communion in the sacraments, yet so as to be outside the house through the perversity of their character. For so the sacrament begins to be of profit even to themselves, which previously was of no avail

#### CHAPTER 53

101. The question is also commonly raised, whether baptism is to be held valid which is received from one who had not himself received it, if, from some promptings of curiosity, he had chanced to learn how it ought to be conferred; and whether it makes no difference in what spirit the recipient receives it, whether in mockery or in sincerity: if in mockery, whether the difference arises when the mockery is of deceit, as in the Church, or in what is thought to be the Church; or when it is in jest, as in a play: and which is the more accursed, to receive it deceitfully in the Church, or in heresy or schism without deceit, that is to say, with full sincerity of heart: or whether it be worse to receive it deceitfully in heresy or in good faith in a play, if any one were to be moved by a sudden feeling of religion in the midst of his acting. And yet, if we compare such an one even with him who receives it

deceitfully in the Catholic Church itself, I should be surprised if any one were to doubt which of the two should be preferred; for I do not see of what avail the intention of him who gives in truth can be to him who receives deceitfully. But let us consider, in the case of some one also giving it in deceit, when both the given and the recipient are acting deceitfully in the unity of the Catholic Church itself, whether this should rather be acknowledged as baptism, or that which is given in a play, if any one should be found who received it faithfully from a sudden impulse of religion: or whether it be not true that, so far as the men themselves are concerned, there is a very great difference between the believing recipient in a play, and the mocking recipient in the Church; but that in regard to the genuineness of the sacrament there is no difference. For if it makes no difference in respect to the genuineness of the sacrament within the Catholic Church itself, whether certain persons celebrate it in truth or in deceit, so long as both still celebrate the same thing, I cannot see why it should make a difference outside, seeing that he who receives it is not cloaked by his deceit, but he is changed by his religious impulse. Or have those truthful persons among whom it is celebrated more power for the confirmation of the sacrament, than those deceitful men by whom and in whom it is celebrated can exert for its invalidation? And yet, if the deceit be subsequently brought to light, no one seeks a repetition of the sacrament; but the fraud is either punished by excommunication or set right by penitence

102. But the safe course for us is, not to advance with any rashness of judgment in setting forth a view which has neither been started in any regional Council of the Catholic Church nor established in a plenary one; but to assert, with all the confidence of a voice that cannot be gainsaid, what has been confirmed by the consent of the universal Church, under the direction of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, if any one were to press me—supposing I were duly seated in a Council in which a question were raised on points like these—to declare what my own opinion was, without reference to the previously expressed views of others, whose judgment I would rather follow, if I were under the influence of the same feelings as led me to assert what I have said before, I should have no hesitation in saying that all men possess baptism who have received it in any place, from any sort of men, provided that it were consecrated in the

words of the gospel, and received without deceit on their part with some degree of faith; although it would be of no profit to them for the salvation of their souls if they were without charity, by which they might be grafted into the Catholic Church. For “though I have faith,” says the apostle, “so that I could remove mountains, but have not charity, I am nothing.” Just as already, from the established decrees of our predecessors, I have no hesitation in saying that all those have baptism who, though they receive it deceitfully, yet receive it in the Church, or where the Church is thought to be by those in whose society it is received, of whom it was said, “They went out from us.” But when there was no society of those who so believed, and when the man who received it did not himself hold such belief, but the whole thing was done as a farce, or a comedy, or a jest,—if I were asked whether the baptism which was thus conferred should be approved, I should declare my opinion that we ought to pray for the declaration of God’s judgment through the medium of some revelation seeking it with united prayer and earnest groanings of suppliant devotion, humbly deferring all the time to the decision of those who were to give their judgment after me, in case they should set forth anything as already known and determined. And, therefore, how much the more must I be considered to have given my opinion now without prejudice to the utterance of more diligent research or authority higher than my own!

#### CHAPTER 54

103. But now I think that it is fully time for me to bring to their due termination these books also on the subject of baptism, in which our Lord God has shown to us, through the words of the peaceful Bishop Cyprian and his brethren who agreed with him, how great is the love which should be felt for catholic unity; so that even where they were otherwise minded until God should reveal even this to them, they should rather bear with those who thought differently from themselves, than sever themselves from them by a wicked schism; whereby the mouths of the Donatists are wholly closed, even if we say nothing of the followers of Maximian. For if the wicked pollute the good in unity, then even Cyprian himself already found no Church to which he could be joined. But if the wicked do not infect the good in unity, then the sacrilegious Donatist has no ground to set before

himself for separation. But if baptism is both possessed and transferred by the multitude of others who work the works of the flesh, of which it is said, that “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” then it is possessed and transferred also by heretics, who are numbered among those works; because they could have transferred it had they remained, and did not lose it by their secession. But men of this kind confer it on their fellows as fruitlessly and uselessly as the others who resemble them, inasmuch as they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. And as, when those others are brought into the right path, it is not that baptism begins to be present, having been absent before, but that it begins to profit them, having been already in them; so is it the case with heretics as well. Whence Cyprian and those who thought with him could not impose limits on the Catholic Church, which they would not mutilate. But in that they were otherwise minded we feel no fear, seeing that we too share in their veneration for Peter; yet in that they did not depart from unity we rejoice, seeing that we, like them, are founded on the rock



# ON CARE TO BE HAD FOR THE DEAD

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

DE CURA PRO MORTUIS.

TRANSLATED BY REV. H. BROWNE, M.A.

OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE; LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESAN  
COLLEGE, CHICHESTER.

FROM THE RETRACTATIONS, BOOK II. CHAP. 64

The book, *On care to be had for the dead*, I wrote, having been asked by letter whether it profits any person after death that his body shall be buried at the memorial of any Saint. The book begins thus: Long time unto your Holiness, my venerable fellow-bishop Paulinus.

1. Long time, my venerable fellow-bishop Paulinus, have I been thy Holiness's debtor for an answer; even since thou wrotest to me by them of the household of our most religious daughter Flora, asking of me whether it profit any man after death that his body is buried at the memorial of some Saint. This, namely, had the said widow begged of thee for her son deceased in those parts, and thou hadst written her an answer, consoling her, and announcing to her concerning the body of the faithful young man Cynegius, that the thing which she with motherly and pious affection desired was done, to wit, by placing it in the basilica of most blessed Felix the Confessor. Upon which occasion it came to pass, that by the same bearers of thy letter thou didst write also to me, raising the like question, and craving that I would answer what I thought of this matter, at the same time not forbearing to say what are thine own sentiments. For thou sayest

that to thy thinking these be no empty motions of religious and faithful minds, which take this care for their deceased friends. Thou addest, moreover, that it cannot be void of effect that the whole Church is wont to supplicate for the departed: so that hence it may be further conjectured that it doth profit a person after death, if by the faith of his friends for the interment of his body such a spot be provided wherein may be apparent the aid, likewise in this way sought, of the Saints.

2. But this being the case, how to this opinion that should not be contrary which the Apostle says, “For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each may receive according to the things he hath done by the body, whether good or bad;” this, thou signifiest, thou dost not well see. For this apostolic sentence doth before death admonish to be done, that which may profit after death; not then, first, when there is to be now a receiving of that which a person shall have done before death. True, but this question is thus solved, namely, that there is a certain kind of life by which is acquired, while one lives in this body, that it should be possible for these things to be of some help to the departed; and, consequently, it is “according to the things done by the body,” that they are aided by the things which shall, after they have left the body, be religiously done on their behalf. For there are whom these things aid nothing at all, namely, when they are done either for persons whose merits are so evil, that neither by such things are they worthy to be aided; or for persons whose merits are so good, that of such things they have no need as aids. Of the kind of life, therefore, which each hath led by the body, doth it come, that these things profit or profit not, whatever are piously done on his behalf when he has left the body. For touching merit whereby these things profit, if none have been gotten in this life, it is in vain sought after this life. So it comes to pass as well that not unmeaningly doth the Church, or care of friends, bestow upon the departed whatever of religion it shall be able; as also that, nevertheless, each receiveth “according to the things which he hath done by the body, whether it be good or bad,” the Lord rendering unto each according to his works. For, that this which is bestowed should be capable of profiting him after the body, this was acquired in that life which he hath led in the body.

3. Possibly thy inquiry is satisfied by this my brief reply. But what other considerations move me, to which I think meet to answer, do thou for a short space attend. In the books of the Maccabees we read of sacrifice offered for the dead. Howbeit even if it were no where at all read in the Old Scriptures, not small is the authority, which in this usage is clear, of the whole Church, namely, that in the prayers of the priest which are offered to the Lord God at His altar, the Commendation of the dead hath also its place. But then, whether there be some profit accruing unto the soul of the dead from the place of its body, requires a more careful inquiry. And first, whether it make any difference in causing or increasing of misery after this life to the spirits of men if their bodies be not buried, this must be looked into, not in the light of opinion however commonly received, but rather of the holy writ of our religion. For we are not to credit that, as is read in Maro, the unburied are prohibited from navigating and crossing the infernal stream: because forsooth

“To none is giv’n to pass the hideous banks

And waters hoarse, ere in their meet abode

The bones have sunk to rest.”

Who can incline a Christian heart to these poetical and fabulous figments, when the Lord Jesus, to the intent that under the hands of their enemies, who should have their bodies in their power, Christians might lie down without a fear, asserts that not a hair of their head shall perish, exhorting that they should not fear them which when they have killed the body have nothing more that they can do? Of which in the first book “On the City of God,” I have methinks enough spoken, to break the teeth in their mouths who, in imputing to Christian times the barbarous devastation, especially that which Rome has lately suffered, do cast up to us this also, that Christ did not there come to the succor of His own. To whom when it is answered that the souls of the faithful were, according to the merits of their faith, by Him taken into protection, they insult over us with talking of their corpses left unburied. All this matter, then, concerning burial I have in such words as these expounded.

4. “But” (say I) “in such a slaughter-heap of dead bodies, could they not even be buried? not this, either, doth pious faith too greatly dread, holding that which is foretold that not even consuming beasts will be an hindrance to the rising again of bodies of which not a hair of the head shall perish. Nor in any wise would Truth say, “Fear not them which kill the body, but cannot kill the soul;” if it could at all hinder the life to come whatever enemies might choose to do with the bodies of the slain. Unless haply any is so absurd as to contend that they ought not to be feared before death, lest they kill the body, but ought to be feared after death, lest, having killed the body, they suffer it not to be buried. Is that then false which Christ says, “Who kill the body, and afterwards have no more that they can do,” if they have so great things that they can do on dead bodies? Far be the thought, that that should be false which Truth hath said. For the thing said is, that they do somewhat when they kill, because in the body there is feeling while it is in killing, but afterward they have nothing more that they can do because there is no feeling in the body when killed. Many bodies, then, of Christians the earth hath not covered: but none of them hath any separated from heaven and earth, the whole of which He filleth with presence of Himself, Who knoweth whence to resuscitate that which He created. It is said indeed in the Psalm, “The dead bodies of thy servants have they given for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth: they have shed their blood like water round about Jerusalem, and there was no man to bury them:” but more to heighten the cruelty of them who did these things, not to the infelicity of them who suffered them. For, however, in sight of men these things may seem hard and dire, yet “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” So, then, all these things, care of funeral, bestowal in sepulture, pomp of obsequies, are more for comfort of the living, than for help to the dead. If it at all profit the ungodly to have costly sepulture, it shall harm the godly to have vile sepulture or none. Right handsome obsequies in sight of men did that rich man who was clad in purple receive of the crowd of his housefolk; but far more handsome did that poor man who was full of sores obtain of the ministry of Angels; who bore him not out into a marble tomb, but into Abraham’s bosom bore him on high. All this they laugh at, against whom we have undertaken to defend the City of God: but for all that their own philosophers, even, held care of sepulture in contempt; and often whole armies, while dying for their earthly

country, cared not where they should after lie, or to what beasts they should become meat; and the poets had leave to say of this matter with applause

“though all unurn’d he lie,

His cov’ring is the overarching sky.”

How much less ought they to make a vaunting about unburied bodies of Christians, to whom the flesh itself with all its members, re-fashioned, not only from the earth, but even from the other elements, yea, from their most secret windings, whereinto these evanished corpses have retired, is assured to be in an instant of time rendered back and made entire as at the first, according to His promise?

5. Yet it follows not that the bodies of the departed are to be despised and flung aside, and above all of just and faithful men, which bodies as organs and vessels to all good works their spirit hath holily used. For if a father’s garment and ring, and whatever such like, is the more dear to those whom they leave behind, the greater their affection is towards their parents, in no wise are the bodies themselves to be spurned, which truly we wear in more familiar and close conjunction than any of our putting on. For these pertain not to ornament or aid which is applied from without, but to the very nature of man. Whence also the funerals of the just men of old were with dutiful piety cared for, and their obsequies celebrated, and sepulture provided: and themselves while living did touching burial or even translation of their bodies give charge to their sons. Tobias also, to have by burying of the dead obtained favor with God, is by witness of an Angel commended. The Lord Himself also, about to rise on the third day, both preaches, and commends to be preached, the good work of a religious woman, that she poured out a precious ointment over His limbs, and did it for His burial: and they are with praise commemorated in the Gospel, who having received His Body from the cross did carefully and with reverend honor see it wound and laid in the sepulchre. These authorities however do not put us upon thinking that there is in dead bodies any feeling; but rather, that the Providence of God (Who is moreover pleased with such offices of piety) doth charge itself with the bodies also of the dead, this they betoken, to the intent our faith of resurrection might be stayed up thereby. Where also is wholesomely

learned, how great may be the reward for alms which we do unto the living and feeling, if not even that be lost before God, whatever of duty and of diligence is paid to the lifeless members of men. There are indeed also other things, which in speaking of the bestowal or removal of their bodies the holy Patriarchs willed to be understood as spoken by the prophetic Spirit: but this is not the place to treat thoroughly of these things, seeing that sufficeth which we have said. But if the lack of those things which are necessary for sustentation of the living, as food and clothing, however heavy affliction attend the lacking, do not break in good men the manly courage of bearing and enduring, nor eradicate piety from the mind, but by exercising make it more fruitful; how much more doth lack of those things which are wont to be applied for care of funerals and bestowal of bodies of the departed, not make them wretched, now that in the hidden abodes of the pious they are at rest! And therefore, when these things have to dead bodies of Christians in that devastation of the great City or of other towns also been lacking, there is neither fault of the living, who could not afford these things, nor pain of the dead who could not feel the same. This is my opinion concerning the ground and reason of sepulture. Which I have therefore from another book of mine transferred to this, because it was easier to rehearse this, than to express the same matter in another way.

6. If this be true, doubtless also the providing for the interment of bodies a place at the Memorials of Saints, is a mark of a good human affection towards the remains of one's friends: since if there be religion in the burying, there cannot but be religion in taking thought where the burying shall be. But while it is desirable there should be such like solaces of survivors, for the showing forth of their pious mind towards their beloved, I do not see what helps they be to the dead save in this way: that upon recollection of the place in which are deposited the bodies of those whom they love, they should by prayer commend them to those same Saints, who have as patrons taken them into their charge to aid them before the Lord. Which indeed they would be still able to do, even though they were not able to inter them in such places. But then the only reason why the name Memorials or Monuments is given to those sepulchres of the dead which become specially distinguished, is that they recall to memory, and by putting in mind cause us to think of, them who by death are withdrawn from

the eyes of the living, that they may not by forgetfulness be also withdrawn from men's hearts. For both the term Memorial most plainly shews this, and Monument is so named from monishing, that is, putting in mind. For which reason the Greeks also call that mnemeion which we call a Memorial or Monument: because in their tongue the memory itself, by which we remember, is called mneme. When therefore the mind recollects where the body of a very dear friend lies buried, and thereupon there occurs to the thoughts a place rendered venerable by the name of a Martyr, to that same Martyr doth it commend the soul in affection of heartfelt recollection and prayer. And when this affection is exhibited to the departed by faithful men who were most dear to them, there is no doubt that it profits them who while living in the body merited that such things should profit them after this life. But even if some necessity should through absence of all facility not allow bodies to be interred, or in such places interred, yet should there be no premitting of supplications for the spirits of the dead: which supplications, that they should be made for all in Christian and catholic fellowship departed, even without mentioning of their names, under a general commemoration, the Church hath charged herself withal; to the intent that they which lack, for these offices, parents or sons or whatever kindred or friends, may have the same afforded unto them by the one pious mother which is common to all. But if there were lack of these supplications, which are made with right faith and piety for the dead, I account that it should not a whit profit their spirits, howsoever in holy places the lifeless bodies should be deposited.

7. When therefore the faithful mother of a faithful son departed desired to have his body deposited in the basilica of a Martyr, forasmuch as she believed that his soul would be aided by the merits of the Martyr, the very believing of this was a sort of supplication, and this profited, if aught profited. And in that she recurs in her thoughts to this same sepulchre, and in her prayers more and more commends her son, the spirit of the departed is aided, not by the place of its dead body, but by that which springs from memory of the place, the living affection of the mother. For at once the thought, who is commended and to whom, doth touch, and that with no unprofitable emotion, the religious mind of her who prays. For also in prayer to God, men do with the members of their bodies that which

becometh suppliants, when they bend their knees, when they stretch forth their hands, or even prostrate themselves on the ground, and whatever else they visibly do, albeit their invisible will and heart's intention be known unto God, and He needs not these tokens that any man's mind should be opened unto Him: only hereby one more excites himself to pray and groan more humbly and more fervently. And I know not how it is, that, while these motions of the body cannot be made but by a motion of the mind preceding, yet by the same being outwardly in visible sort made, that inward invisible one which made them is increased: and thereby the heart's affection which preceded that they might be made, groweth because they are made. But still if any be in that way held, or even bound, that he is not able to do these things with his limbs, it does not follow that the inner man does not pray, and before the eyes of God in its most secret chamber, where it hath compunction, cast itself on the ground. So likewise, while it makes very much difference, where a person deposits the body of his dead, while he supplicates for his spirit unto God, because both the affection preceding chose a spot which was holy, and after the body is there deposited the recalling to mind of that holy spot renews and increases the affection which had preceded; yet, though he may not be able in that place which his religious mind did choose to lay in the ground him whom he loves, in no wise ought he to cease from necessary supplications in commending of the same. For wheresoever the flesh of the departed may lie or not lie, the spirit requires rest and must get it: for the spirit in its departing from thence took with it the consciousness without which it could make no odds how one exists, whether in a good estate or a bad: and it does not look for aiding of its life from that flesh to which it did itself afford the life which it withdrew in its departing, and is to render back in its returning; since not flesh to spirit, but spirit unto flesh procureth merit even of very resurrection, whether it be unto punishment or unto glory that it is to come to life again.

8. We read in the Ecclesiastical History which Eusebius wrote in Greek, and Ruffinus turned into the Latin tongue, of Martyr's bodies in Gaul exposed to dogs, and how the leavings of those dogs and bones of the dead were, even to uttermost consumption, by fire burned up; and the ashes of the same scattered on the river Rhone, lest any thing should be left for any sort whatever of memorial. Which thing must be believed to have been to no



other end divinely permitted, but that Christians should learn in confessing Christ, while they despise this life, much more to despise sepulture. For this thing, which with savage rage was done to the bodies of Martyrs, if it could any whit hurt them, to impair the blessed resting of their most victorious spirits, would assuredly not have been suffered to be done. In very deed therefore it was declared, that the Lord in saying, “Fear not them which kill the body, and afterward have no more that they can do,” did not mean that He would not permit them to do any thing to the bodies of His followers when dead; but that whatever they might be permitted to do, nothing should be done that could lessen the Christian felicity of the departed, nothing thereof reach to their consciousness while yet living after death; nothing avail to the detriment, no, not even of the bodies themselves, to diminish aught of their integrity when they should rise again.

9. And yet, by reason of that affection of the human heart, whereby “no man ever hateth his own flesh,” if men have reason to know that after their death their bodies will lack any thing which in each man’s nation or country the wonted order of sepulture demandeth, it makes them sorrowful as men; and that which after death reacheth not unto them, they do before death fear for their bodies: so that we find in the Books of Kings, God by one prophet threatening another prophet who had transgressed His word, that his carcase should not be brought into the sepulchre of his fathers. Which the Scripture hath on this wise: “Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast been disobedient to the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the charge which the Lord thy God commanded thee, and hast returned and eaten bread and drunk water in the place in which He commanded thee not to eat bread, nor drink water, thy carcase shall not be brought into the sepulchre of thy fathers.” Now if in considering what account is to be made of this punishment, we go by the Gospel, where we have learned that after the slaying of the body there is no cause to fear lest the lifeless members should suffer any thing, it is not even to be called a punishment. But if we consider a man’s human affection towards his own flesh, it was possible for him to be frightened or saddened, while living, by that of which he would have no sense when dead: and this was a punishment, because the mind was pained by that thing about to happen to its body, howsoever when it did happen it would feel no pain. To this intent, namely, it pleased the Lord to punish His servant, who not of his

own contumacy had spurned to fulfill His command, but by deceit of another's falsehood thought himself to be obeying when he obeyed not. For it is not to be thought that he was killed by the teeth of the beast as one whose soul should be thence snatched away to the torments of hell: seeing that over his very body the same lion which had killed it did keep watch, while moreover the beast on which he rode was left unhurt, and along with that fierce beast did with intrepid presence stand there beside his master's corpse. By which marvellous sign it appeareth, that the man of God was, say rather, checked temporally even unto death, than punished after death. Of which matter, the Apostle when on account of certain offenses he had mentioned the sicknesses and deaths of many, says, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord. But when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world." That Prophet, truly, the very man who had beguiled him, did with much respect bury in his own tomb, and took order for his own burying beside his bones: in hope that thereby his own bones might be spared, when, according to the prophecy of that man of God, Josiah king of Judah did in that land disinter the bones of many dead, and with the same bones defile the sacrilegious altars which had been set up for the graven images. For he spared that tomb in which lay the prophet who more than three hundred years before predicted those things, and for his sake neither was the sepulture of him who had seduced him violated. By that affection namely, which causes that no man ever hateth his own flesh, this man had taken forethought for his carcase, who had slain with a lie his own soul. By reason then of this, the natural love which every man hath for his own flesh, it was both to the one a punishment to learn that he should not be in the sepulchre of his fathers, and to the other a care to take order beforehand that his own bones should be spared, if he should lie beside him whose sepulchre no man should violate.

10. This affection the Martyrs of Christ contending for the truth did overcome: and it is no marvel that they despised that whereof they should, when death was overpast, have no feeling, when they could not by those tortures, which while alive they did feel, be overcome. God was able, no doubt, (even as He permitted not the lion when it had slain the Prophet, to touch his body further, and of a slayer made it to be a keeper): He was able,

I say, to have kept the slain bodies of His own from the dogs to which they had been flung; He was able in innumerable ways to have deterred the rage of the men themselves, that to burn the carcasses, to scatter the ashes, they should not dare: but it was fit that this experience also should not be lacking to manifold variety of temptations, lest the fortitude of confession which would not for the saving of the life of the body give way to the savageness of persecution, should be tremblingly anxious for the honor of a sepulchre: in a word, lest faith of resurrection should dread the consuming of the body. It was fit then, that even these things should be permitted, in order that, even after these examples of so great horror, the Martyrs, fervent in confession of Christ, should become witnesses of this truth also, in which they had learned that they by whom their bodies should be slain had after that no more that they could do. Because, whatever they should do to dead bodies, they would after all do nothing, seeing that in flesh devoid of all life, neither was it possible for him to feel aught who had thence departed, nor for Him to lose aught thereof, Who created the same. But while these things were doing to the bodies of the slain, albeit the Martyrs, not frightened by them, did with great fortitude suffer, yet among the brethren was there exceeding sorrow, because there was given them no means of paying the last honors to the remains of the Saints, neither secretly to withdraw any part thereof, (as the same history testifies,) did the watchings of cruel sentinels permit. So, while those which had been slain, in the tearing asunder of their limbs, in the burning up of their bones, in the dispersion of their ashes, could feel no misery; yet these who had nothing of them that they could bury, did suffer torture of exceeding grief in pitying them; because what those did in no sort feel, these in some sort did feel for them, and where was henceforth for those no more suffering, yet these did in woful compassion suffer for them.

11. In regard to that woful compassion which I have mentioned, are those praised, and by king David blessed, who to the dry bones of Saul and Jonathan afforded mercy of sepulture. But yet what mercy is that, which is afforded to them that have feeling of nothing? Or haply is this to be challenged back to that conceit of an infernal river which men unburied were not able to pass over? Far be this from the faith of Christians: else hath it gone most ill with so great a multitude of Martyrs, for whom there could

be no burying of their bodies, and Truth did cheat them when It said, “Fear not them which kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do,” if these have been able to do to them so great evils, by which they were hindered to pass over to the places which they longed for. But, because this without all doubt is most false, and it neither any whit hurts the faithful to have their bodies denied sepulture, nor any whit the giving of sepulture unto infidels advantageth them; why then are those who buried Saul and his son said to have done mercy, and for this are blessed by that godly king, but because it is a good affection with which the hearts of the pitiful are touched, when they grieve for that in the dead bodies of other men, which, by that affection through which no man ever hateth his own flesh, they would not have done after their own death to their own bodies; and what they would have done by them when they shall have no more feeling, that they take care to do by others now having no feeling while themselves have yet feeling?

12. Stories are told of certain appearances or visions, which may seem to bring into this discussion a question which should not be slighted. It is said, namely, that dead men have at times either in dreams or in some other way appeared to the living who knew not where their bodies lay unburied, and have pointed out to them the place, and admonished that the sepulture which was lacking should be afforded them. These things if we shall answer to be false, we shall be thought impudently to contradict the writings of certain faithful men, and the senses of them who assure us that such things have happened to themselves. But it is to be answered, that it does not follow that we are to account the dead to have sense of these things, because they appear in dreams to say or indicate or ask this. For living men do also appear oftentimes to the living as they sleep, while they themselves know not that they do appear; and they are told by them, what they dreamed, namely, that in their dream the speakers saw them doing or saying something. Then if it may be that a person in a dream should see me indicating to him something that has happened or even foretelling something about to happen, while I am perfectly unwitting of the thing and altogether regardless not only what he dreams, but whether he is awake while I am asleep, or he asleep while I am awake, or whether at one and the same time we are both awake or asleep, at what time he has the dream in

which he sees me: what marvel if the dead be unconscious and insensible of these things, and, for all that, are seen by the living in their dreams, and say something which those on awaking find to be true? By angelical operations, then, I should think it is effected, whether permitted from above, or commanded, that they seem in dreams to say something about burying of their bodies, when they whose the bodies are are utterly unconscious of it. Now this is sometimes serviceably done; whether for some sort of solace to the survivors, to whom pertain those dead whose likenesses appear to them as they dream; or whether that by these admonitions the human race may be made to have regard to humanity of sepulture, which, allow that it be no help to the departed, yet is there culpable irreligiousness in slighting of it. Sometimes however, by fallacious visions, men are cast into great errors, who deserve to suffer this. As, if one should see in a dream, what AENEAS by poetic falsity is told to have seen in the world beneath: and there should appear to him the likeness of some unburied man, which should speak such words as PALINURUS is said to have spoken to him; and when he awakes, he should find the body in that place where he heard say while dreaming, that it lay unburied, and was admonished and asked to bury it when found; and because he finds this to be true, should believe that the dead are buried on purpose that their souls may pass to places from which he dreamed that the souls of men unburied are by an infernal law prohibited: does he not, in believing all this, exceedingly swerve from the path of truth?

13. Such, however, is human infirmity, that when in a dream a person shall see a dead man, he thinks it is the soul that he sees: but when he shall in like manner dream of a living man, he has no doubt that it is not a soul nor a body, but the likeness of a man that has appeared to him: just as if it were not possible in regard of dead men, in the same sort unconscious of it, that it should not be their souls, but their likenesses that appear to the sleepers. Of a surety, when we were at Milan, we heard tell of a certain person of whom was demanded payment of a debt, with production of his deceased father's acknowledgment, which debt unknown to the son the father had paid, whereupon the man began to be very sorrowful, and to marvel that his father while dying did not tell him what he owed when he also made his will. Then in this exceeding anxiousness of his, his said father appeared to him in a dream, and made known to him where was the counter

acknowledgment by which that acknowledgment was cancelled. Which when the young man had found and showed, he not only rebutted the wrongful claim of a false debt, but also got back his father's note of hand which the father had not got back when the money was paid. Here then the soul of a man is supposed to have had care for his son, and to have come to him in his sleep, that, teaching him what he did not know, he might relieve him of a great trouble. But about the very same time as we heard this, it chanced at Carthage that the rhetorician Eulogius, who had been my disciple in that art, being (as he himself, after our return to Africa, told us the story) in course of lecturing to his disciples on Cicero's rhetorical books, as he looked over the portion of reading which he was to deliver on the following day, fell upon a certain passage, and not being able to understand it, was scarce able to sleep for the trouble of his mind: in which night, as he dreamed, I expounded to him that which he did not understand; nay, not I, but my likeness, while I was unconscious of the thing, and far away beyond the sea, it might be, doing, or it might be dreaming, some other thing, and not in the least caring for his cares. In what way these things come about, I know not: but in what way soever they come, why do we not believe it comes in the same way for a person in a dream to see a dead man, as it comes that he sees a living man? both, no doubt, neither knowing nor caring who, or where, or when, dreams of their images.

14. Like dreams, moreover, are also some visions of persons awake, who have had their senses troubled, such as phrenetic persons, or those who are mad in any way: for they too talk to themselves just as though they were speaking to people verily present, and as well with absent as with present, whose images they perceive, whether persons living or dead. But just as they which live, are unconscious that they are seen of them and talk with them; for indeed they are not really themselves present, or themselves make speeches, but through troubled senses, these persons are wrought upon by such-like imaginary visions; just so they also who have departed this life, to persons thus affected appear as present, while they be absent, and whether any man sees them in regard of their image, are themselves utterly unconscious.

15. Similar to this is also that condition when persons, with their senses more profoundly in abeyance than is the case in sleep, are occupied with the like visions. For to them also appear images of quick and dead; but then, when they return to their senses, whatever dead they say they have seen are thought to have been verily with them: and they who hear these things pay no heed to the circumstance that there were seen in like manner the images of certain living persons, absent and unconscious. A certain man by name Curma, of the municipal town of Tullium, which is hard by Hippo, a poor member of the Curia, scarcely competent to serve the office of a duumvir of that place, and a mere rustic, being ill, and all his senses entranced, lay all but dead for several days: a very slight breathing in his nostrils, which on applying the hand was just felt, and barely betokened that he lived, was all that kept him from being buried for dead. Not a limb did he stir, nothing did he take in the way of sustenance, neither in the eyes nor in any other bodily sense was he sensible of any annoyance that impinged upon them. Yet he was seeing many things like as in a dream, which, when at last after a great many days he woke up, he told that he had seen. And first, presently after he opened his eyes, Let some one go, said he, to the house of Curma the smith, and see what is doing there. And when some one had gone thither, the smith was found to have died in that moment that the other had come back to his senses, and, it might almost be said, revived from death. Then, as those who stood by eagerly listened, he told them how the other had been ordered to be had up, when he himself was dismissed; and that he had heard it said in that place from which he had returned, that it was not Curma of the Curia, but Curma the smith who had been ordered to be fetched to that place of the dead. Well, in these dream-like visions of his, among those deceased persons whom he saw handled according to the diversity of their merits, he recognized also some whom he had known when alive. That they were the very persons themselves I might perchance have believed, had he not in the course of this seeming dream of his seen also some who are alive even to this present time, namely, some clerks of his district, by whose presbyter there he was told to be baptized at Hippo by me, which thing he said had also taken place. So then he had seen a presbyter, clerks, myself, persons, to wit, not yet dead, in this vision in which he afterwards also saw dead persons. Why may he not be thought to have seen these last in the same way as he saw us? that is, both the one sort, and the other, absent and

unconscious, and consequently not the persons themselves, but similitudes of them just as of the places? He saw, namely, both a plot of ground where was that presbyter with the clerks, and Hippo where he was by me seemingly baptized: in which spots assuredly he was not, when he seemed to himself to be there. For what was at that time going on there, he knew not: which, without doubt, he would have known if he had verily been there. The sights beheld, therefore, were those which are not presented in the things themselves as they are, but shadowed forth in a sort of images of the things. In fine, after much that he saw, he narrated how he had, moreover, been led into Paradise, and how it was there said to him, when he was thence dismissed to return to his own family, “Go, be baptized, if thou wilt be in this place of the blessed.” Thereupon, being admonished to be baptized by me, he said it was done already. He who was talking with him replied, “Go, be truly baptized; for that thou didst but see in the vision.” After this he recovered, went his way to Hippo. Easter was now approaching, he gave his name among the other Competents, alike with very many unknown to us; nor did he care to make known the vision to me or to any of our people. He was baptized, at the close of the holy days he returned to his own place. After the space of two years or more, I learned the whole matter; first, through a certain friend of mine and his at my own table, while we were talking about some such matters: then I took it up, and made the man in his own person tell me the story, in the presence of some honest townsmen of his attesting the same, both concerning his marvellous illness, how he lay all but dead for many days, and about that other Curma the smith, what I have mentioned above, and about all these matters; which, while he was telling me, they recalled to mind, and assured me, that they had also at that time heard them from his lips. Wherefore, just as he saw his own baptism, and myself, and Hippo, and the basilica, and the baptistery, not in the very realities, but in a sort of similitudes of the things; and so likewise certain other living persons, without consciousness on the part of the same living persons: then why not just so those dead persons also, without consciousness on the part of the same dead persons?

16. Why should we not believe these to be angelic operations through dispensation of the providence of God, Who maketh good use of both good things and evil, according to the unsearchable depth of His judgments?



whether thereby the minds of mortals be instructed, or whether deceived; whether consoled, or whether terrified: according as unto each one there is to be either a showing of mercy, or a taking of vengeance, by Him to Whom, not without a meaning, the Church doth sing “of mercy and of judgment.” Let each, as it shall please him, take what I say. If the souls of the dead took part in the affairs of the living, and if it were their very selves that, when we see them, speak to us in sleep; to say nothing of others, there is my own self, whom my pious mother would no night fail to visit, that mother who by land and sea followed me that she might live with me. Far be the thought that she should, by a life more happy, have been made cruel, to that degree that when any thing vexes my heart she should not even console in his sadness the son whom she loved with an only love, whom she never wished to see mournful. But assuredly that which the sacred Psalm sings in our ears, is true; “Because my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken me up.” Then if our parents have forsaken us, how take they part in our cares and affairs? But if parents do not, who else are there of the dead who should know what we are doing, or what we suffer? Isaiah the Prophet says, “For Thou art our Father: because Abraham hath not known us, and Israel is not cognizant of us.” If so great Patriarchs were ignorant what was doing towards the People of them begotten, they to whom, believing God, the People itself to spring from their stock was promised; how are the dead mixed up with affairs and doings of the living, either for cognizance or help? How say we that those were favored who deceased ere the evils came which followed hard upon the decease, if also after death they feel whatever things befall in the calamitousness of human life? Or haply do we err in saying this, and in accounting them to be quietly at rest whom the unquiet life of the living makes solicitous? What then is that which to the most godly king Josias God promised as a great benefit, that he should first die, that he might not see the evils which He threatened should come to that place and People? Which words of God are these: “Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: concerning My words which thou hast heard, and didst fear before My face when thou didst hear what I have spoken concerning this place and them which dwell therein, that it should be forsaken and under a curse; and hast rent thy garments, and wept before Me, and I have heard thee, saith the Lord of Sabaoth: not so; behold, I will add thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be added unto them in peace; and

thine eyes shall not see all the evils which I am bringing upon this place and upon them that dwell therein.” He, frightened by God’s comminations, had wept, and rent his garments, and is made, by hastening on of his death, to be without care of all future evils, because he should so rest in peace, that all those things he should not see. There then are the spirits of the departed, where they see not whatever things are doing, or events happening, in this life to men. Then how do they see their own graves, or their own bodies, whether they lie cast away, or buried? How do they take part in the misery of the living, when they are either suffering their own evils, if they have contracted such merits; or do rest in peace, as was promised to this Josiah, where they undergo no evils, either by suffering themselves, or by compassionate suffering with others, freed from all evils which by suffering themselves or with others while they lived here they did undergo?

17. Some man may say: “If there be not in the dead any care for the living, how is it that the rich man, who was tormented in hell, asked father Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers not as yet dead, and to take course with them, that they should not come themselves also into the same place of torments?” But does it follow, that because the rich man said this, he knew what his brethren were doing, or what they were suffering at that time? Just in that same way had he care for the living, albeit what they were doing he wist not at all, as we have care for the dead, albeit what they do we confessedly wot not. For if we cared not for the dead, we should not, as we do, supplicate God on their behalf. In fine, Abraham did not send Lazarus, and also answered, that they have here Moses and the Prophets, whom they ought to hear that they might not come to those torments. Where again it occurs to ask, how it was that what was doing here, father Abraham himself wist not, while he knew that Moses and the Prophets are here, that is, their books, by obeying which men should escape the torments of hell: and knew, in short, that rich man to have lived in delights, but the poor man Lazarus to have lived in labors and sorrows? For this also he says to him; “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime hast received good things, but Lazarus evil things.” He knew then these things which had taken place of course among the living, not among the dead. True, but it may be that, not while the things were doing in their lifetime, but after their death, he learned these

things, by information of Lazarus: that it be not false which the Prophet saith, "Abraham hath not known us."

18. So then we must confess that the dead indeed do not know what is doing here, but while it is in doing here: afterwards, however, they hear it from those who from hence go to them at their death; not indeed every thing, but what things those are allowed to make known who are suffered also to remember these things; and which it is meet for those to hear, whom they inform of the same. It may be also, that from the Angels, who are present in the things which are doing here, the dead do hear somewhat, which for each one of them to hear He judgeth right to Whom all things are subject. For were there not Angels, who could be present in places both of quick and dead, the Lord Jesus had not said, "It came to pass also that the poor man died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Therefore, now here, now there, were they able to be, who from hence bore thither whom God willed. It may be also, that the spirits of the dead do learn some things which are doing here, what things it is necessary that they should know, and what persons it is necessary should know the same, not only things past or present, but even future, by the Spirit of God revealing them: like as not all men, but the Prophets while they lived here did know, nor even they all things, but only what things to be revealed to them the providence of God judged meet. Moreover, that some from the dead are sent to the living, as, on the other hand, Paul from the living was rapt into Paradise, divine Scripture doth testify. For Samuel the Prophet, appearing to Saul when living, predicted even what should befall the king: although some think it was not Samuel himself, that could have been by magical arts evoked, but that some spirit, meet for so evil works, did figure his semblance: though the book Ecclesiasticus, which Jesus, son of Sirach, is reputed to have written, and which on account of some resemblance of style is pronounced to be Solomon's, contains in the praise of the Fathers, that Samuel even when dead did prophesy. But if this book be spoken against from the canon of the Hebrews, (because it is not contained therein,) what shall we say of Moses, whom certainly we read both in Deuteronomy to have died, and in the Gospel to have, together with Elias who died not, appeared unto the living?

19. Hence too is solved that question, how is it that the Martyrs, by the very benefits which are given to them that pray, indicate that they take an interest in the affairs of men, if the dead know not what the quick are doing. For not only by effects of benefits, but in the very beholding of men, it is certain, that the Confessor Felix (whose denizenship among you thou piously lovest) appeared when the barbarians were attacking Nola, as we have heard not by uncertain rumors, but by sure witnesses. But such things are of God exhibited, far otherwise than as the usual order hath itself, unto each kind of creatures apportioned. For it does not follow because water was, when it pleased the Lord, in a moment changed into wine, that we are not to regard the worth and efficacy of water in the proper order of the elements, as distinct from the rarity, or rather singularity, of that divine work: nor because Lazarus rose again, therefore that every dead man rises when he will; or that a lifeless man is raised up by a living, in the same way as a sleeping man by one who is awake. Other be the limits of human things, other the signs of divine virtues: other they be that are naturally, other that be miraculously done: albeit both unto nature God is present that it may be, and unto miracles nature is not lacking. We are not to think then, that to be interested in the affairs of the living is in the power of any departed who please, only because to some men's healing or help the Martyrs be present: but rather we are to understand that it must needs be by a Divine power that the Martyrs are interested in affairs of the living, from the very fact that for the departed to be by their proper nature interested in affairs of the living is impossible.

20. Howbeit it is a question which surpasses the strength of my understanding, after what manner the Martyrs aid them who by them, it is certain, are helped; whether themselves by themselves be present at the same time in so different places, and by so great distance lying apart one from another, either where their Memorials are, or beside their Memorials, wheresoever they are felt to be present: or whether, while they themselves, in a place congruous with their merits, are removed from all converse with mortals, and yet do in a general sort pray for the needs of their suppliants, (like as we pray for the dead, to whom however we are not present, nor know where they be or what they be doing,) God Almighty, Who is every where present, neither bounded in with us nor remote from us, hearing and

granting the Martyrs' prayers, doth by angelic ministries every where diffused afford to men those solaces, to whom in the misery of this life He seeth meet to afford the same, and, touching His Martyrs, doth where He will, when He will, how He will, and chiefest through their Memorials, because this He knoweth to be expedient for us unto edifying of the faith of Christ for Whose confession they suffered, by marvellous and ineffable power and goodness cause their merits to be had in honor. A matter is this, too high that I should have power to attain unto it, too abstruse that I should be able to search it out; and therefore which of these two be the case, or whether perchance both one and the other be the case, that sometimes these things be done by very presence of the Martyrs, sometimes by Angels taking upon them the person of the Martyrs, I dare not define; rather would I seek this at them who know it. For it is not to be thought that no man knows these things: (not indeed he who thinks he knows, and knows not,) for there be gifts of God, Who bestows on these some one, on those some other, according to the Apostle who says, that "to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal; to one indeed," saith he, "is given by the Spirit discourse of wisdom; to another discourse of science according to the same Spirit; while to another faith in the same Spirit; to another the gift of healings in one Spirit; to one workings of miracles; to one prophecy; to one discerning of spirits; to one kinds of tongues; to one interpretation of discourses. But all these worketh one and the same spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." Of all these spiritual gifts, which the Apostle hath rehearsed, to whomsoever is given discerning of spirits, the same knoweth these things as they are meet to be known.

21. Such, we may believe, was that John the Monk, whom the elder Theodosius, the Emperor, consulted concerning the issue of the civil war: seeing he had also the gift of prophecy. For that not each several person has a several one of those gifts, but that one man may have more gifts than one, I make no question. This John, then, when once a certain most religious woman desired to see him, and to obtain this did through her husband make vehement entreaty, refused indeed this request because he had never allowed this to women, but "Go," said he, "tell thy wife, she shall see me this night, but in her sleep." And so it came to pass: and he gave her advice, whatever was meet to be given to a wedded believing woman. And she, on

her awaking, made known to her husband that she had seen a man of God, such as he knew him to be, and what she had been told by him. The person who learned this from them, reported it to me, a grave man and a noble, and most worthy to be believed. But if I myself had seen that holy monk, because (it is said) he was most patient in hearing questions and most wise in answering, I would have sought of him, as touching our question, whether he himself came to that woman in sleep, that is to say, his spirit in the form of his body, just as we dream that we see ourselves in the form of our own body; or whether, while he himself was doing something else, or, if asleep, was dreaming of something else, it was either by an Angel or in some other way that such vision took place in the woman's dream; and that it would so be, as he promised, he himself foreknew by the Spirit of prophecy revealing the same. For if he was himself present to her in her dream, of course it was by miraculous grace that he was enabled so to do, not by nature; and by God's gift, not by faculty of his own. But if, while he was doing some other thing or sleeping and occupied with other sights, the woman saw him in her sleep, then doubtless some such thing took place, as that is which we read in the Acts of the Apostles, where the Lord Jesus speaks to Ananias concerning Saul, and informs him that Saul has seen Ananias coming unto him, while Ananias himself wist not of it. The man of God would make answer to me of these things as the case might be, and then about the Martyrs I should go on to ask of him, whether they be themselves present in dreams, or in whatever other way to those who see them in what shape they will; and above all when the demons in men confess themselves tormented by the Martyrs, and ask them to spare them; or whether these things be wrought through angelic powers, to the honor and commendation of the Saints for men's profit, while those are in supreme rest, and wholly free for other far better sights, apart from us, and praying for us. For it chanced at Milan at (the tomb of) the holy Martyrs Protasius and Gervasius, that Ambrose the bishop, at that time living, being expressly named, in like manner as were the dead whose names they were rehearsing, the demons confessed him and besought him to spare them, he being the while otherwise engaged, and when this was taking place, altogether unwitting of it. Or whether indeed these things are wrought, somewhiles by very presence of the Martyrs, otherwhiles by that of Angels; and whether it be possible, or by what tokens possible, for us to

discriminate these two cases; or whether to perceive and to judge of these things none be able, but he which hath that gift through God's Spirit, "dividing unto every man severally as He will:" the same John, methinks, would discourse to me of all these matters, as I should wish; that either by his teaching I might learn, and what I should be told should know to be true and certain; or I should believe what I knew not, upon his telling me what things he knew. But if peradventure he should make answer out of holy Scripture, and say, "Things higher than thou, seek thou not; and things stronger than thou, search thou not; but what the Lord hath commanded thee, of those things bethink thee alway:" this also I should thankfully accept. For it is no small gain if, when any things are obscure and uncertain to us, and we not able to comprehend them, it be at any rate clear and certain that we are not to seek them; and what thing each one wishes to learn, accounting it to be profitable that he should know it, he should learn that it is no harm that he know it not.

22. Which things being so, let us not think that to the dead for whom we have a care, any thing reaches save what by sacrifices either of the altar, or of prayers, or of alms, we solemnly supplicate: although not to all for whom they are done be they profitable, but to them only by whom while they live it is obtained that they should be profitable. But forasmuch as we discern not who these be, it is meet to do them for all regenerate persons, that none of them may be passed by to whom these benefits may and ought to reach. For better it is that these things shall be superfluously done to them whom they neither hinder nor help, than lacking to them whom they help. More diligently however doth each man these things for his own near and dear friends, in order that they may be likewise done unto him by his. But as for the burying of the body, whatever is bestowed on that, is no aid of salvation, but an office of humanity, according to that affection by which "no man ever hateth his own flesh." Whence it is fitting that he take what care he is able for the flesh of his neighbor, when he is gone that bare it. And if they do these things who believe not the resurrection of the flesh, how much more are they beholden to do the same who do believe; that so, an office of this kind bestowed upon a body, dead but yet to rise again and to remain to eternity, may also be in some sort a testimony of the same faith? But, that a person is buried at the memorials of the Martyrs, this, I think, so far profits

the departed, that while commending him also to the Martyrs' patronage, the affection of supplication on his behalf is increased.

23. Here, to the things thou hast thought meet to inquire of me, thou hast such reply as I have been able to render: which if it be more than enough prolix, thou must excuse this, for it was done through love of holding longer talk with thee. For this book, then, how thy charity shall receive it, let me, I pray thee, know by a second letter: though doubtless it will be more welcome for its bearer's sake, to wit our brother and fellow-presbyter Candidianus, whom, having been by thy letter made acquainted with him, I have welcomed with all my heart, and am loath to let him depart. For greatly in the charity of Christ hath he by his presence consoled us, and, to say truth, it was at his instance that I have done thy bidding. For with so great businesses is my heart distraught, that had not he by ever and anon putting me in mind not suffered me to forget it, assuredly to thy questioning reply of mind had not been forthcoming.



# ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

IN FOUR BOOKS.

TRANSLATED BY REV. PROFESSOR J. F. SHAW, OF LONDONDERRY.

# CONTENTS

## ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

### Book I

#### Chapter 1

The Interpretation of Scripture Depends on the Discovery and Enunciation of the Meaning, and is to Be Undertaken in Dependence on God's Aid

#### Chapter 2

What a Thing Is, and What A Sign

#### Chapter 3

Some Things are for Use, Some for Enjoyment

#### Chapter 4

Difference of Use and Enjoyment

#### Chapter 5

The Trinity the True Object of Enjoyment

#### Chapter 6

In What Sense God is Ineffable

#### Chapter 7

What All Men Understand by the Term God

#### Chapter 8

God to Be Esteemed Above All Else, Because He is Unchangeable Wisdom

#### Chapter 9

All Acknowledge the Superiority of Unchangeable Wisdom to that Which is Variable

#### Chapter 10

To See God, the Soul Must Be Purified

#### Chapter 11

Wisdom Becoming Incarnate, a Pattern to Us of Purification

#### Chapter 12

In What Sense the Wisdom of God Came to Us

Chapter 13

The Word Was Made Flesh

Chapter 14

How the Wisdom of God Healed Man

Chapter 15

Faith is Buttressed by the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, and is Stimulated by His Coming to Judgment

Chapter 16

Christ Purges His Church by Medicinal Afflictions

Chapter 17

Christ, by Forgiving Our Sins, Opened the Way to Our Home

Chapter 18

The Keys Given to the Church

Chapter 19

Bodily and Spiritual Death and Resurrection

Chapter 20

The Resurrection to Damnation

Chapter 21

Neither Body Nor Soul Extinguished at Death

Chapter 22

God Alone to Be Enjoyed

Chapter 23

Man Needs No Injunction to Love Himself and His Own Body

Chapter 24

No Man Hates His Own Flesh, Not Even Those Who Abuse It

Chapter 25

A Man May Love Something More Than His Body, But Does Not Therefore Hate His Body

Chapter 26

The Command to Love God and Our Neighbor Includes a Command to Love Ourselves

Chapter 27

The Order of Love

Chapter 28

How We are to Decide Whom to Aid

Chapter 29

We are to Desire and Endeavor that All Men May Love God

[Chapter 30](#)  
[Whether Angels are to Be Reckoned Our Neighbors](#)

[Chapter 31](#)  
[God Uses Rather Than Enjoys Us](#)

[Chapter 32](#)  
[In What Way God Uses Man](#)

[Chapter 33](#)  
[In What Way Man Should Be Enjoyed](#)

[Chapter 34](#)  
[Christ the First Way to God](#)

[Chapter 35](#)  
[The Fulfillment and End of Scripture is the Love of God and Our Neighbor](#)

[Chapter 36](#)  
[That Interpretation of Scripture Which Builds Us Up in Love is Not Perniciously Deceptive Nor Mendacious, Even Though It Be Faulty. The Interpreter, However, Should Be Corrected](#)

[Chapter 37](#)  
[Dangers of Mistaken Interpretation](#)

[Chapter 38](#)  
[Love Never Faileth](#)

[Chapter 39](#)  
[He Who is Mature in Faith, Hope and Love, Needs Scripture No Longer](#)

[Chapter 40](#)  
[What Manner of Reader Scripture Demands](#)

## [Book II](#)

[Chapter 1](#)  
[Signs, Their Nature and Variety](#)

[Chapter 2](#)  
[Of the Kind of Signs We are Now Concerned with](#)

[Chapter 3](#)  
[Among Signs, Words Hold the Chief Place](#)

[Chapter 4](#)  
[Origin of Writing](#)

[Chapter 5](#)  
[Scripture Translated into Various Languages](#)

## Chapter 6

Use of the Obscurities in Scripture Which Arise from Its Figurative Language

## Chapter 7

Steps to Wisdom: First, Fear; Second, Piety; Third, Knowledge; Fourth, Resolution; Fifth, Counsel; Sixth, Purification of Heart; Seventh, Stop or Termination, Wisdom

## Chapter 8

The Canonical Books

## Chapter 9

How We Should Proceed in Studying Scripture

## Chapter 10

Unknown or Ambiguous Signs Prevent Scripture from Being Understood

## Chapter 11

Knowledge of Languages, Especially of Greek and Hebrew, Necessary to Remove Ignorance or Signs

## Chapter 12

A Diversity of Interpretations is Useful. Errors Arising from Ambiguous Words

## Chapter 13

How Faulty Interpretations Can Be Emended

## Chapter 14

How the Meaning of Unknown Words and Idioms is to Be Discovered

## Chapter 15

Among Versions a Preference is Given to the Septuagint and the Itala

## Chapter 16

The Knowledge Both of Language and Things is Helpful for the Understanding of Figurative Expressions

## Chapter 17

Origin of the Legend of the Nine Muses

## Chapter 18

No Help is to Be Despised, Even Though It Come from a Profane Source

## Chapter 19

Two Kinds Of Heathen Knowledge

## Chapter 20

The Superstitious Nature of Human Institutions

## Chapter 21

Superstition of Astrologers

Chapter 22

The Folly of Observing the Stars in Order to Predict the Events of a Life

Chapter 23

Why We Repudiate Arts of Divination

Chapter 24

The Intercourse and Agreement with Demons Which Superstitious Observances Maintain

Chapter 25

In Human Institutions Which are Not Superstitious, There are Some Things Superfluous and Some Convenient and Necessary.

Chapter 26

What Human Contrivances We are to Adopt, and What We are to Avoid

Chapter 27

Some Departments of Knowledge, Not of Mere Human Invention, Aid Us in Interpreting Scripture

Chapter 28

To What Extent History is an Aid

Chapter 29

To What Extent Natural Science is an Exegetical Aid

Chapter 30

What the Mechanical Arts Contribute to Exegetics

Chapter 31

Use of Dialectics. Of Fallacies

Chapter 32

Valid Logical Sequence is Not Devised But Only Observed by Man

Chapter 33

False Inferences May Be Drawn from Valid Reasonings, and Vice Versa

Chapter 34

It is One Thing to Know the Laws of Inference, Another to Know the Truth of Opinions

Chapter 35

The Science of Definition is Not False, Though It May Be Applied to Falsities

Chapter 36

The Rules of Eloquence are True, Though Sometimes Used to Persuade Men of What is False

Chapter 37

Use of Rhetoric and Dialectic

Chapter 38

The Science of Numbers Not Created, But Only Discovered, by Man

Chapter 39

To Which of the Above-Mentioned Studies Attention Should Be Given, and in What Spirit

Chapter 40

Whatever Has Been Rightly Said by the Heathen, We Must Appropriate to Our Uses

Chapter 41

What Kind of Spirit is Required for the Study of Holy Scripture

Chapter 42

Sacred Scripture Compared with Profane Authors

Book III

Chapter 1

Summary of the Foregoing Books, and Scope of that Which Follows

Chapter 2

Rule for Removing Ambiguity by Attending to Punctuation

Chapter 3

How Pronunciation Serves to Remove Ambiguity. Different Kinds of Interrogation

Chapter 4

How Ambiguities May Be Solved

Chapter 5

It is a Wretched Slavery Which Takes the Figurative Expressions of Scripture in a Literal Sense

Chapter 6

Utility of the Bondage of the Jews

Chapter 7

The Useless Bondage of the Gentiles

Chapter 8

The Jews Liberated from Their Bondage in One Way, the Gentiles in Another

Chapter 9

Who is in Bondage to Signs, and Who Not

Chapter 10

How We are to Discern Whether a Phrase is Figurative

Chapter 11

Rule for Interpreting Phrases Which Seem to Ascribe Severity to God and the Saints

Chapter 12

Rule for Interpreting Those Sayings and Actions Which are Ascribed to God and the Saints, and Which Yet Seem to the Unskillful to Be Wicked

[Chapter 13](#)  
[Same Subject, Continued](#)

[Chapter 14](#)  
[Error of Those Who Think that There is No Absolute Right and Wrong](#)

[Chapter 15](#)  
[Rule for Interpreting Figurative Expressions](#)

[Chapter 16](#)  
[Rule for Interpreting Commands and Prohibitions](#)

[Chapter 17](#)  
[Some Commands are Given to All in Common, Others to Particular Classes](#)

[Chapter 18](#)  
[We Must Take into Consideration the Time at Which Anything Was Enjoyed or Allowed](#)

[Chapter 19](#)  
[Wicked Men Judge Others by Themselves](#)

[Chapter 20](#)  
[Consistency of Good Men in All Outward Circumstances](#)

[Chapter 21](#)  
[David Not Lustful, Though He Fell into Adultery](#)

[Chapter 22](#)  
[Rule Regarding Passages of Scripture in Which Approval is Expressed of Actions Which are Now Condemned by Good Men](#)

[Chapter 23](#)  
[Rule Regarding the Narrative of Sins of Great Men](#)

[Chapter 24](#)  
[The Character of the Expressions Used is Above All to Have Weight](#)

[Chapter 25](#)  
[The Same Word Does Not Always Signify the Same Thing](#)

[Chapter 26](#)  
[Obscure Passages are to Be Interpreted by Those Which are Clearer](#)

[Chapter 27](#)  
[One Passage Susceptible of Various Interpretations](#)

[Chapter 28](#)  
[It is Safer to Explain a Doubtful Passage by Other Passages of Scripture Than by Reason](#)

[Chapter 29](#)  
[The Knowledge of Tropes is Necessary](#)



Chapter 30

The Rules of Tichonius the Donatist Examined

Chapter 31

The First Rule of Tichonius

Chapter 32

The Second Rule of Tichonius

Chapter 33

The Third Rule of Tichonius

Chapter 34

The Fourth Rule of Tichonius

Chapter 35

The Fifth Rule of Tichonius

Chapter 36

The Sixth Rule of Tichonius

Chapter 37

The Seventh Rule of Tichonius

Book IV

Chapter 1

This Work Not Intended as a Treatise on Rhetoric

Chapter 2

It is Lawful for a Christian Teacher to Use the Art of Rhetoric

Chapter 3

The Proper Age and the Proper Means for Acquiring Rhetorical Skill

Chapter 4

The Duty of the Christian Teacher

Chapter 5

Wisdom of More Importance Than Eloquence to the Christian Teacher

Chapter 6

The Sacred Writers Unite Eloquence with Wisdom

Chapter 7

Examples of True Eloquence Drawn from the Epistles of Paul and the Prophecies of Amos

Chapter 8

The Obscurity of the Sacred Writers, Though Compatible with Eloquence, Not to Be Imitated by Christian Teachers

Chapter 9

How, and with Whom, Difficult Passages are to Be Discussed

Chapter 10

The Necessity for Perspicuity of Style

Chapter 11

The Christian Teacher Must Speak Clearly, But Not Inelegantly

Chapter 12

The Aim of the Orator, According to Cicero, is to Teach, to Delight, and to Move. Of These, Teaching is the Most Essential

Chapter 13

The Hearer Must Be Moved as Well as Instructed

Chapter 14

Beauty of Diction to Be in Keeping with the Matter

Chapter 15

The Christian Teacher Should Pray Before Preaching

Chapter 16

Human Directions Not to Be Despised, Though God Makes the True Teacher

Chapter 17

Threefold Division of The Various Styles of Speech

Chapter 18

The Christian Orator is Constantly Dealing with Great Matters

Chapter 19

The Christian Teacher Must Use Different Styles on Different Occasions

Chapter 20

Examples of the Various Styles Drawn from Scripture

Chapter 21

Examples of the Various Styles, Drawn from the Teachers of the Church, Especially Ambrose and Cyprian

Chapter 22

The Necessity of Variety in Style

Chapter 23

How the Various Styles Should Be Mingled

Chapter 24

The Effects Produced by the Majestic Style

Chapter 25

How the Temperate Style is to Be Used

Chapter 26

In Every Style the Orator Should Aim at Perspicuity, Beauty, and Persuasiveness

Chapter 27

The Man Whose Life is in Harmony with His Teaching Will Teach with Greater Effect

Chapter 28

Truth is More Important Than Expression. What is Meant by Strife About Words

Chapter 29

It is Permissible for a Preacher to Deliver to the People What Has Been Written by a More Eloquent Man Than Himself

Chapter 30

The Preacher Should Commence His Discourse with Prayer to God

Chapter 31

Apology for the Length of the Work

# Book I

Containing a General View of the Subjects Treated in Holy Scripture.

Argument—The author divides his work into two parts, one relating to the discovery, the other to the expression, of the true sense of scripture. He shows that to discover the meaning we must attend both to things and to signs, as it is necessary to know what things we ought to teach to the Christian people, and also the signs of these things, that is, where the knowledge of these things is to be sought. In this first book he treats of things, which he divides into three classes,—things to be enjoyed, things to be used, and things which use and enjoy. The only object which ought to be enjoyed is the triune God, who is our highest good and our true happiness. We are prevented by our sins from enjoying God; and that our sins might be taken away, “the word was made flesh,” our Lord suffered, and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, taking to himself as his bride the church, in which we receive remission of our sins. And if our sins are remitted and our souls renewed by grace, we may await with hope the resurrection of the body to eternal glory; if not, we shall be raised to everlasting punishment. These matters relating to faith having been expounded, the author goes on to show that all objects, except God, are for use; for, though some of them may be loved, yet our love is not to rest in them, but to have reference to God. And we ourselves are not objects of enjoyment to God; he uses us, but for our own advantage. He then goes on to show that love—the love of God for his own sake and the love of our neighbor for God’s sake—is the fulfillment and the end of all Scripture. After adding a few words about hope, he shows, in conclusion, that faith, hope, and love are graces essentially necessary for him who would understand and explain aright the Holy Scriptures.

## CHAPTER 1

THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE DEPENDS ON THE DISCOVERY AND ENUNCIATION OF THE MEANING, AND IS TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN DEPENDENCE ON GOD'S AID

1. There are two things on which all interpretation of Scripture depends: the mode of ascertaining the proper meaning, and the mode of making known the meaning when it is ascertained. We shall treat first of the mode of ascertaining, next of the mode of making known, the meaning;—a great and arduous undertaking, and one that, if difficult to carry out, it is, I fear, presumptuous to enter upon. And presumptuous it would undoubtedly be, if I were counting on my own strength; but since my hope of accomplishing the work rests on Him who has already supplied me with many thoughts on this subject, I do not fear but that He will go on to supply what is yet wanting when once I have begun to use what He has already given. For a possession which is not diminished by being shared with others, if it is possessed and not shared, is not yet possessed as it ought to be possessed. The Lord saith “Whosoever hath, to him shall be given.” He will give, then, to those who have; that is to say, if they use freely and cheerfully what they have received, He will add to and perfect His gifts. The loaves in the miracle were only five and seven in number before the disciples began to divide them among the hungry people. But when once they began to distribute them, though the wants of so many thousands were satisfied, they filled baskets with the fragments that were left. Now, just as that bread increased in the very act of breaking it, so those thoughts which the Lord has already vouchsafed to me with a view to undertaking this work will, as soon as I begin to impart them to others, be multiplied by His grace, so that, in this very work of distribution in which I have engaged, so far from incurring loss and poverty, I shall be made to rejoice in a marvellous increase of wealth.

## CHAPTER 2

WHAT A THING IS, AND WHAT A SIGN

2. All instruction is either about things or about signs; but things are learnt by means of signs. I now use the word “thing” in a strict sense, to signify

that which is never employed as a sign of anything else: for example, wood, stone, cattle, and other things of that kind. Not, however, the wood which we read Moses cast into the bitter waters to make them sweet, nor the stone which Jacob used as a pillow, nor the ram which Abraham offered up instead of his son; for these, though they are things, are also signs of other things. There are signs of another kind, those which are never employed except as signs: for example, words. No one uses words except as signs of something else; and hence may be understood what I call signs: those things, to wit, which are used to indicate something else. Accordingly, every sign is also a thing; for what is not a thing is nothing at all. Every thing, however, is not also a sign. And so, in regard to this distinction between things and signs, I shall, when I speak of things, speak in such a way that even if some of them may be used as signs also, that will not interfere with the division of the subject according to which I am to discuss things first and signs afterwards. But we must carefully remember that what we have now to consider about things is what they are in themselves, not what other things they are signs of.

### CHAPTER 3

#### SOME THINGS ARE FOR USE, SOME FOR ENJOYMENT

3. There are some things, then, which are to be enjoyed, others which are to be used, others still which enjoy and use. Those things which are objects of enjoyment make us happy. Those things which are objects of use assist, and (so to speak) support us in our efforts after happiness, so that we can attain the things that make us happy and rest in them. We ourselves, again, who enjoy and use these things, being placed among both kinds of objects, if we set ourselves to enjoy those which we ought to use, are hindered in our course, and sometimes even led away from it; so that, getting entangled in the love of lower gratifications, we lag behind in, or even altogether turn back from, the pursuit of the real and proper objects of enjoyment.

### CHAPTER 4

#### DIFFERENCE OF USE AND ENJOYMENT

4. For to enjoy a thing is to rest with satisfaction in it for its own sake. To use, on the other hand, is to employ whatever means are at one's disposal to obtain what one desires, if it is a proper object of desire; for an unlawful use ought rather to be called an abuse. Suppose, then, we were wanderers in a strange country, and could not live happily away from our fatherland, and that we felt wretched in our wandering, and wishing to put an end to our misery, determined to return home. We find, however, that we must make use of some mode of conveyance, either by land or water, in order to reach that fatherland where our enjoyment is to commence. But the beauty of the country through which we pass, and the very pleasure of the motion, charm our hearts, and turning these things which we ought to use into objects of enjoyment, we become unwilling to hasten the end of our journey; and becoming engrossed in a factitious delight, our thoughts are diverted from that home whose delights would make us truly happy. Such is a picture of our condition in this life of mortality. We have wandered far from God; and if we wish to return to our Father's home, this world must be used, not enjoyed, that so the invisible things of God may be clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,—that is, that by means of what is material and temporary we may lay hold upon that which is spiritual and eternal.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE TRINITY THE TRUE OBJECT OF ENJOYMENT

5. The true objects of enjoyment, then, are the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are at the same time the Trinity, one Being, supreme above all, and common to all who enjoy Him, if He is an object, and not rather the cause of all objects, or indeed even if He is the cause of all. For it is not easy to find a name that will suitably express so great excellence, unless it is better to speak in this way: The Trinity, one God, of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things. Thus the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and each of these by Himself, is God, and at the same time they are all one God; and each of them by Himself is a complete substance, and yet they are all one substance. The Father is not the Son nor the Holy Spirit; the Son is not the Father nor the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is not the Father nor the Son: but the Father is only Father, the

Son is only Son, and the Holy Spirit is only Holy Spirit. To all three belong the same eternity, the same unchangeableness, the same majesty, the same power. In the Father is unity, in the Son equality, in the Holy Spirit the harmony of unity and equality; and these three attributes are all one because of the Father, all equal because of the Son, and all harmonious because of the Holy Spirit.

## CHAPTER 6

### IN WHAT SENSE GOD IS INEFFABLE

6. Have I spoken of God, or uttered His praise, in any worthy way? Nay, I feel that I have done nothing more than desire to speak; and if I have said anything, it is not what I desired to say. How do I know this, except from the fact that God is unspeakable? But what I have said, if it had been unspeakable, could not have been spoken. And so God is not even to be called “unspeakable,” because to say even this is to speak of Him. Thus there arises a curious contradiction of words, because if the unspeakable is what cannot be spoken of, it is not unspeakable if it can be called unspeakable. And this opposition of words is rather to be avoided by silence than to be explained away by speech. And yet God, although nothing worthy of His greatness can be said of Him, has condescended to accept the worship of men’s mouths, and has desired us through the medium of our own words to rejoice in His praise. For on this principle it is that He is called Deus (God). For the sound of those two syllables in itself conveys no true knowledge of His nature; but yet all who know the Latin tongue are led, when that sound reaches their ears, to think of a nature supreme in excellence and eternal in existence.

## CHAPTER 7

### WHAT ALL MEN UNDERSTAND BY THE TERM GOD

7. For when the one supreme God of gods is thought of, even by those who believe that there are other gods, and who call them by that name, and worship them as gods, their thought takes the form of an endeavor to reach the conception of a nature, than which nothing more excellent or more exalted exists. And since men are moved by different kinds of pleasures,



partly by those which pertain to the bodily senses, partly by those which pertain to the intellect and soul, those of them who are in bondage to sense think that either the heavens, or what appears to be most brilliant in the heavens, or the universe itself, is God of gods: or if they try to get beyond the universe, they picture to themselves something of dazzling brightness, and think of it vaguely as infinite, or of the most beautiful form conceivable; or they represent it in the form of the human body, if they think that superior to all others. Or if they think that there is no one God supreme above the rest, but that there are many or even innumerable gods of equal rank, still these too they conceive as possessed of shape and form, according to what each man thinks the pattern of excellence. Those, on the other hand, who endeavor by an effort of the intelligence to reach a conception of God, place Him above all visible and bodily natures, and even above all intelligent and spiritual natures that are subject to change. All, however, strive emulously to exalt the excellence of God: nor could any one be found to believe that any being to whom there exists a superior is God. And so all concur in believing that God is that which excels in dignity all other objects.

## CHAPTER 8

### GOD TO BE ESTEEMED ABOVE ALL ELSE, BECAUSE HE IS UNCHANGEABLE WISDOM

8. And since all who think about God think of Him as living, they only can form any conception of Him that is not absurd and unworthy who think of Him as life itself; and, whatever may be the bodily form that has suggested itself to them, recognize that it is by life it lives or does not live, and prefer what is living to what is dead; who understand that the living bodily form itself, however it may outshine all others in splendor, overtop them in size, and excel them in beauty, is quite a distinct thing from the life by which it is quickened; and who look upon the life as incomparably superior in dignity and worth to the mass which is quickened and animated by it. Then, when they go on to look into the nature of the life itself, if they find it mere nutritive life, without sensibility, such as that of plants, they consider it inferior to sentient life, such as that of cattle; and above this, again, they place intelligent life, such as that of men. And, perceiving that even this is subject to change, they are compelled to place above it, again, that

unchangeable life which is not at one time foolish, at another time wise, but on the contrary is wisdom itself. For a wise intelligence, that is, one that has attained to wisdom, was, previous to its attaining wisdom, unwise. But wisdom itself never was unwise, and never can become so. And if men never caught sight of this wisdom, they could never with entire confidence prefer a life which is unchangeably wise to one that is subject to change. This will be evident, if we consider that the very rule of truth by which they affirm the unchangeable life to be the more excellent, is itself unchangeable: and they cannot find such a rule, except by going beyond their own nature; for they find nothing in themselves that is not subject to change.

#### CHAPTER 9

ALL ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPERIORITY OF UNCHANGEABLE WISDOM TO THAT WHICH IS VARIABLE

9. Now, no one is so egregiously silly as to ask, “How do you know that a life of unchangeable wisdom is preferable to one of change?” For that very truth about which he asks, how I know it? is unchangeably fixed in the minds of all men, and presented to their common contemplation. And the man who does not see it is like a blind man in the sun, whom it profits nothing that the splendor of its light, so clear and so near, is poured into his very eye-balls. The man, on the other hand, who sees, but shrinks from this truth, is weak in his mental vision from dwelling long among the shadows of the flesh. And thus men are driven back from their native land by the contrary blasts of evil habits, and pursue lower and less valuable objects in preference to that which they own to be more excellent and more worthy.

#### CHAPTER 10

TO SEE GOD, THE SOUL MUST BE PURIFIED

10. Wherefore, since it is our duty fully to enjoy the truth which lives unchangeably, and since the triune God takes counsel in this truth for the things which He has made, the soul must be purified that it may have power to perceive that light, and to rest in it when it is perceived. And let us look upon this purification as a kind of journey or voyage to our native land. For

it is not by change of place that we can come nearer to Him who is in every place, but by the cultivation of pure desires and virtuous habits.

## CHAPTER 11

### WISDOM BECOMING INCARNATE, A PATTERN TO US OF PURIFICATION

11. But of this we should have been wholly incapable, had not Wisdom condescended to adapt Himself to our weakness, and to show us a pattern of holy life in the form of our own humanity. Yet, since we when we come to Him do wisely, He when He came to us was considered by proud men to have done very foolishly. And since we when we come to Him become strong, He when He came to us was looked upon as weak. But “the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” And thus, though Wisdom was Himself our home, He made Himself also the way by which we should reach our home.

## CHAPTER 12

### IN WHAT SENSE THE WISDOM OF GOD CAME TO US

And though He is everywhere present to the inner eye when it is sound and clear, He condescended to make Himself manifest to the outward eye of those whose inward sight is weak and dim. “For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

12. Not then in the sense of traversing space, but because He appeared to mortal men in the form of mortal flesh, He is said to have come to us. For He came to a place where He had always been, seeing that “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him.” But, because men, who in their eagerness to enjoy the creature instead of the Creator had grown into the likeness of this world, and are therefore most appropriately named “the world,” did not recognize Him, therefore the evangelist says, “and the world knew Him not.” Thus, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. Why then did He come, seeing that He was already here, except that it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe?

## CHAPTER 13

### THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH

In what way did He come but this, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us”? Just as when we speak, in order that what we have in our minds may enter through the ear into the mind of the hearer, the word which we have in our hearts becomes an outward sound and is called speech; and yet our thought does not lose itself in the sound, but remains complete in itself, and takes the form of speech without being modified in its own nature by the change: so the Divine Word, though suffering no change of nature, yet became flesh, that He might dwell among us.

## CHAPTER 14

### HOW THE WISDOM OF GOD HEALED MAN

13. Moreover, as the use of remedies is the way to health, so this remedy took up sinners to heal and restore them. And just as surgeons, when they bind up wounds, do it not in a slovenly way, but carefully, that there may be a certain degree of neatness in the binding, in addition to its mere usefulness, so our medicine, Wisdom, was by His assumption of humanity adapted to our wounds, curing some of them by their opposites, some of them by their likes. And just as he who ministers to a bodily hurt in some cases applies contraries, as cold to hot, moist to dry, etc., and in other cases applies likes, as a round cloth to a round wound, or an oblong cloth to an oblong wound, and does not fit the same bandage to all limbs, but puts like to like; in the same way the Wisdom of God in healing man has applied Himself to his cure, being Himself healer and medicine both in one. Seeing, then, that man fell through pride, He restored him through humility. We were ensnared by the wisdom of the serpent: we are set free by the foolishness of God. Moreover, just as the former was called wisdom, but was in reality the folly of those who despised God, so the latter is called foolishness, but is true wisdom in those who overcome the devil. We used our immortality so badly as to incur the penalty of death: Christ used His mortality so well as to restore us to life. The disease was brought in through a woman’s corrupted soul: the remedy came through a woman’s virgin body. To the same class of opposite remedies it belongs, that our vices are

cured by the example of His virtues. On the other hand, the following are, as it were, bandages made in the same shape as the limbs and wounds to which they are applied: He was born of a woman to deliver us who fell through a woman: He came as a man to save us who are men, as a mortal to save us who are mortals, by death to save us who were dead. And those who can follow out the matter more fully, who are not hurried on by the necessity of carrying out a set undertaking, will find many other points of instruction in considering the remedies, whether opposites or likes, employed in the medicine of Christianity.

## CHAPTER 15

FAITH IS BUTTRESSED BY THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST, AND IS STIMULATED BY HIS COMING TO JUDGMENT

14. The belief of the resurrection of our Lord from the dead, and of His ascension into heaven, has strengthened our faith by adding a great buttress of hope. For it clearly shows how freely He laid down His life for us when He had it in His power thus to take it up again. With what assurance, then, is the hope of believers animated, when they reflect how great He was who suffered so great things for them while they were still in unbelief! And when men look for Him to come from heaven as the judge of quick and dead, it strikes great terror into the careless, so that they betake themselves to diligent preparation, and learn by holy living to long for His approach, instead of quaking at it on account of their evil deeds. And what tongue can tell, or what imagination can conceive, the reward He will bestow at the last, when we consider that for our comfort in this earthly journey He has given us so freely of His Spirit, that in the adversities of this life we may retain our confidence in, and love for, Him whom as yet we see not; and that He has also given to each gifts suitable for the building up of His Church, that we may do what He points out as right to be done, not only without a murmur, but even with delight?

## CHAPTER 16

CHRIST PURGES HIS CHURCH BY MEDICINAL AFFLICTIONS

15. For the Church is His body, as the apostle's teaching shows us; and it is even called His spouse. His body, then, which has many members, and all performing different functions, He holds together in the bond of unity and love, which is its true health. Moreover He exercises it in the present time, and purges it with many wholesome afflictions, that when He has transplanted it from this world to the eternal world, He may take it to Himself as His bride, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

#### CHAPTER 17

##### CHRIST, BY FORGIVING OUR SINS, OPENED THE WAY TO OUR HOME

16. Further, when we are on the way, and that not a way that lies through space, but through a change of affections, and one which the guilt of our past sins like a hedge of thorns barred against us, what could He, who was willing to lay Himself down as the way by which we should return, do that would be still gracious and more merciful, except to forgive us all our sins, and by being crucified for us to remove the stern decrees that barred the door against our return?

#### CHAPTER 18

##### THE KEYS GIVEN TO THE CHURCH

17. He has given, therefore, the keys to His Church, that whatsoever it should bind on earth might be bound in heaven, and whatsoever it should loose on earth might be loosed in heaven; that is to say, that whosoever in the Church should not believe that his sins are remitted, they should not be remitted to him; but that whosoever should believe and should repent, and turn from his sins, should be saved by the same faith and repentance on the ground of which he is received into the bosom of the Church. For he who does not believe that his sins can be pardoned, falls into despair, and becomes worse as if no greater good remained for him than to be evil, when he has ceased to have faith in the results of his own repentance.

#### CHAPTER 19

##### BODILY AND SPIRITUAL DEATH AND RESURRECTION

18. Furthermore, as there is a kind of death of the soul, which consists in the putting away of former habits and former ways of life, and which comes through repentance, so also the death of the body consists in the dissolution of the former principle of life. And just as the soul, after it has put away and destroyed by repentance its former habits, is created anew after a better pattern, so we must hope and believe that the body, after that death which we all owe as a debt contracted through sin, shall at the resurrection be changed into a better form;—not that flesh and blood shall inherit the kingdom of God (for that is impossible), but that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. And thus the body, being the source of no uneasiness because it can feel no want, shall be animated by a spirit perfectly pure and happy, and shall enjoy unbroken peace.

#### CHAPTER 20

##### THE RESURRECTION TO DAMNATION

19. Now he whose soul does not die to this world and begin here to be conformed to the truth, falls when the body dies into a more terrible death, and shall revive, not to change his earthly for a heavenly habitation, but to endure the penalty of his sin.

#### CHAPTER 21

##### NEITHER BODY NOR SOUL EXTINGUISHED AT DEATH

And so faith clings to the assurance, and we must believe that it is so in fact, that neither the human soul nor the human body suffers complete extinction, but that the wicked rise again to endure inconceivable punishment, and the good to receive eternal life.

#### CHAPTER 22

##### GOD ALONE TO BE ENJOYED

20. Among all these things, then, those only are the true objects of enjoyment which we have spoken of as eternal and unchangeable. The rest are for use, that we may be able to arrive at the full enjoyment of the

former. We, however, who enjoy and use other things are things ourselves. For a great thing truly is man, made after the image and similitude of God, not as respects the mortal body in which he is clothed, but as respects the rational soul by which he is exalted in honor above the beasts. And so it becomes an important question, whether men ought to enjoy, or to use, themselves, or to do both. For we are commanded to love one another: but it is a question whether man is to be loved by man for his own sake, or for the sake of something else. If it is for his own sake, we enjoy him; if it is for the sake of something else, we use him. It seems to me, then, that he is to be loved for the sake of something else. For if a thing is to be loved for its own sake, then in the enjoyment of it consists a happy life, the hope of which at least, if not yet the reality, is our comfort in the present time. But a curse is pronounced on him who places his hope in man.

21. Neither ought any one to have joy in himself, if you look at the matter clearly, because no one ought to love even himself for his own sake, but for the sake of Him who is the true object of enjoyment. For a man is never in so good a state as when his whole life is a journey towards the unchangeable life, and his affections are entirely fixed upon that. If, however, he loves himself for his own sake, he does not look at himself in relation to God, but turns his mind in upon him self, and so is not occupied with anything that is unchangeable. And thus he does not enjoy himself at his best, because he is better when his mind is fully fixed upon, and his affections wrapped up in, the unchangeable good, than when he turns from that to enjoy even himself. Wherefore if you ought not to love even yourself for your own sake, but for His in whom your love finds its most worthy object, no other man has a right to be angry if you love him too for God's sake. For this is the law of love that has been laid down by Divine authority: "Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself;" but, "Thou shall love God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind:" so that you are to concentrate all your thoughts, your whole life and your whole intelligence upon Him from whom you derive all that you bring. For when He says, "With all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," He means that no part of our life is to be unoccupied, and to afford room, as it were, for the wish to enjoy some other object, but that whatever else may suggest itself to us as an object worthy of love is to be borne into the same



channel in which the whole current of our affections flows. Whoever, then, loves his neighbor aright, ought to urge upon him that he too should love God with his whole heart, and soul, and mind. For in this way, loving his neighbor as himself, a man turns the whole current of his love both for himself and his neighbor into the channel of the love of God, which suffers no stream to be drawn off from itself by whose diversion its own volume would be diminished.

## CHAPTER 23

### MAN NEEDS NO INJUNCTION TO LOVE HIMSELF AND HIS OWN BODY

22. Those things which are objects of use are not all, however, to be loved, but those only which are either united with us in a common relation to God, such as a man or an angel, or are so related to us as to need the goodness of God through our instrumentality, such as the body. For assuredly the martyrs did not love the wickedness of their persecutors, although they used it to attain the favor of God. As, then, there are four kinds of things that are to be loved,—first, that which is above us; second, ourselves; third, that which is on a level with us; fourth, that which is beneath us,—no precepts need be given about the second and fourth of these. For, however far a man may fall away from the truth, he still continues to love himself, and to love his own body. The soul which flies away from the unchangeable Light, the Ruler of all things, does so that it may rule over itself and over its own body; and so it cannot but love both itself and its own body.

23. Moreover, it thinks it has attained something very great if it is able to lord it over its companions, that is, other men. For it is inherent in the sinful soul to desire above all things, and to claim as due to itself, that which is properly due to God only. Now such love of itself is more correctly called hate. For it is not just that it should desire what is beneath it to be obedient to it while itself will not obey its own superior; and most justly has it been said, “He who loveth iniquity hateth his own soul.” And accordingly the soul becomes weak, and endures much suffering about the mortal body. For, of course, it must love the body, and be grieved at its corruption; and the immortality and incorruptibility of the body spring out of the health of the soul. Now the health of the soul is to cling steadfastly to the better part, that

is, to the unchangeable God. But when it aspires to lord it even over those who are by nature its equals,—that is, its fellow-men,—this is a reach of arrogance utterly intolerable.

#### CHAPTER 24

##### NO MAN HATES HIS OWN FLESH, NOT EVEN THOSE WHO ABUSE IT

24. No man, then, hates himself. On this point, indeed, no question was ever raised by any sect. But neither does any man hate his own body. For the apostle says truly, “No man ever yet hated his own flesh.” And when some people say that they would rather be without a body altogether, they entirely deceive themselves. For it is not their body, but its corruptions and its heaviness, that they hate. And so it is not no body, but an uncorrupted and very light body, that they want. But they think a body of that kind would be no body at all, because they think such a thing as that must be a spirit. And as to the fact that they seem in some sort to scourge their bodies by abstinence and toil, those who do this in the right spirit do it not that they may get rid of their body, but that they may have it in subjection and ready for every needful work. For they strive by a kind of toilsome exercise of the body itself to root out those lusts that are hurtful to the body, that is, those habits and affections of the soul that lead to the enjoyment of unworthy objects. They are not destroying themselves; they are taking care of their health.

25. Those, on the other hand, who do this in a perverse spirit, make war upon their own body as if it were a natural enemy. And in this matter they are led astray by a mistaken interpretation of what they read: “The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other.” For this is said of the carnal habit yet unsubdued, against which the spirit lusteth, not to destroy the body, but to eradicate the lust of the body—i.e., its evil habit—and thus to make it subject to the spirit, which is what the order of nature demands. For as, after the resurrection, the body, having become wholly subject to the spirit, will live in perfect peace to all eternity; even in this life we must make it an object to have the carnal habit changed for the better, so that its inordinate affections may not war against the soul. And until this shall take place, “the

flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh;" the spirit struggling, not in hatred, but for the mastery, because it desires that what it loves should be subject to the higher principle; and the flesh struggling, not in hatred, but because of the bondage of habit which it has derived from its parent stock, and which has grown in upon it by a law of nature till it has become inveterate. The spirit, then, in subduing the flesh, is working as it were to destroy the ill-founded peace of an evil habit, and to bring about the real peace which springs out of a good habit. Nevertheless, not even those who, led astray by false notions, hate their bodies would be prepared to sacrifice one eye, even supposing they could do so without suffering any pain, and that they had as much sight left in one as they formerly had in two, unless some object was to be attained which would overbalance the loss. This and other indications of the same kind are sufficient to show those who candidly seek the truth how well-founded is the statement of the apostle when he says, "No man ever yet hated his own flesh." He adds too, "but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church."

## CHAPTER 25

### A MAN MAY LOVE SOMETHING MORE THAN HIS BODY, BUT DOES NOT THEREFORE HATE HIS BODY

26. Man, therefore, ought to be taught the due measure of loving, that is, in what measure he may love himself so as to be of service to himself. For that he does love himself, and does desire to do good to himself, nobody but a fool would doubt. He is to be taught, too, in what measure to love his body, so as to care for it wisely and within due limits. For it is equally manifest that he loves his body also, and desires to keep it safe and sound. And yet a man may have something that he loves better than the safety and soundness of his body. For many have been found voluntarily to suffer both pains and amputations of some of their limbs that they might obtain other objects which they valued more highly. But no one is to be told not to desire the safety and health of his body because there is something he desires more. For the miser, though he loves money, buys bread for himself,—that is, he gives away money that he is very fond of and desires to heap up,—but it is because he values more highly the bodily health which the bread sustains. It

is superfluous to argue longer on a point so very plain, but this is just what the error of wicked men often compels us to do.

## CHAPTER 26

### THE COMMAND TO LOVE GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOR INCLUDES A COMMAND TO LOVE OURSELVES

27. Seeing, then, that there is no need of a command that every man should love himself and his own body,—seeing, that is, that we love ourselves, and what is beneath us but connected with us, through a law of nature which has never been violated, and which is common to us with the beasts (for even the beasts love themselves and their own bodies),—it only remained necessary to lay injunctions upon us in regard to God above us, and our neighbor beside us. “Thou shalt love,” He says, “the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Thus the end of the commandment is love, and that twofold, the love of God and the love of our neighbor. Now, if you take yourself in your entirety,—that is, soul and body together,—and your neighbor in his entirety, soul and body together (for man is made up of soul and body), you will find that none of the classes of things that are to be loved is overlooked in these two commandments. For though, when the love of God comes first, and the measure of our love for Him is prescribed in such terms that it is evident all other things are to find their centre in Him, nothing seems to be said about our love for ourselves; yet when it is said, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” it at once becomes evident that our love for ourselves has not been overlooked.

## CHAPTER 27

### THE ORDER OF LOVE

28. Now he is a man of just and holy life who forms an unprejudiced estimate of things, and keeps his affections also under strict control, so that he neither loves what he ought not to love, nor fails to love what he ought to love, nor loves that more which ought to be loved less, nor loves that equally which ought to be loved either less or more, nor loves that less or

more which ought to be loved equally. No sinner is to be loved as a sinner; and every man is to be loved as a man for God's sake; but God is to be loved for His own sake. And if God is to be loved more than any man, each man ought to love God more than himself. Likewise we ought to love another man better than our own body, because all things are to be loved in reference to God, and another man can have fellowship with us in the enjoyment of God, whereas our body cannot; for the body only lives through the soul, and it is by the soul that we enjoy God.

## CHAPTER 28

### HOW WE ARE TO DECIDE WHOM TO AID

29. Further, all men are to be loved equally. But since you cannot do good to all, you are to pay special regard to those who, by the accidents of time, or place, or circumstance, are brought into closer connection with you. For, suppose that you had a great deal of some commodity, and felt bound to give it away to somebody who had none, and that it could not be given to more than one person; if two persons presented themselves, neither of whom had either from need or relationship a greater claim upon you than the other, you could do nothing fairer than choose by lot to which you would give what could not be given to both. Just so among men: since you cannot consult for the good of them all, you must take the matter as decided for you by a sort of lot, according as each man happens for the time being to be more closely connected with you.

## CHAPTER 29

### WE ARE TO DESIRE AND ENDEAVOR THAT ALL MEN MAY LOVE GOD

30. Now of all who can with us enjoy God, we love partly those to whom we render services, partly those who render services to us, partly those who both help us in our need and in turn are helped by us, partly those upon whom we confer no advantage and from whom we look for none. We ought to desire, however, that they should all join with us in loving God, and all the assistance that we either give them or accept from them should tend to that one end. For in the theatres, dens of iniquity though they be, if a man is fond of a particular actor, and enjoys his art as a great or even as the very

greatest good, he is fond of all who join with him in admiration of his favorite, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of him whom they admire in common; and the more fervent he is in his admiration, the more he works in every way he can to secure new admirers for him, and the more anxious he becomes to show him to others; and if he find any one comparatively indifferent, he does all he can to excite his interest by urging his favorite's merits: if, however, he meet with any one who opposes him, he is exceedingly displeased by such a man's contempt of his favorite, and strives in every way he can to remove it. Now, if this be so, what does it become us to do who live in the fellowship of the love of God, the enjoyment of whom is true happiness of life, to whom all who love Him owe both their own existence and the love they bear Him, concerning whom we have no fear that any one who comes to know Him will be disappointed in Him, and who desires our love, not for any gain to Himself, but that those who love Him may obtain an eternal reward, even Himself whom they love? And hence it is that we love even our enemies. For we do not fear them, seeing they cannot take away from us what we love; but we pity them rather, because the more they hate us the more are they separated from Him whom we love. For if they would turn to Him, they must of necessity love Him as the supreme good, and love us too as partakers with them in so great a blessing.

## CHAPTER 30

### WHETHER ANGELS ARE TO BE RECKONED OUR NEIGHBORS

31. There arises further in this connection a question about angels. For they are happy in the enjoyment of Him whom we long to enjoy; and the more we enjoy Him in this life as through a glass darkly, the more easy do we find it to bear our pilgrimage, and the more eagerly do we long for its termination. But it is not irrational to ask whether in those two commandments is included the love of angels also. For that He who commanded us to love our neighbor made no exception, as far as men are concerned, is shown both by our Lord Himself in the Gospel, and by the Apostle Paul. For when the man to whom our Lord delivered those two commandments, and to whom He said that on these hang all the law and the prophets, asked Him, "And who is my neighbor?" He told him of a certain

man who, going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among thieves, and was severely wounded by them, and left naked and half dead. And He showed him that nobody was neighbor to this man except him who took pity upon him and came forward to relieve and care for him. And the man who had asked the question admitted the truth of this when he was himself interrogated in turn. To whom our Lord says, "Go and do thou likewise;" teaching us that he is our neighbor whom it is our duty to help in his need, or whom it would be our duty to help if he were in need. Whence it follows, that he whose duty it would be in turn to help us is our neighbor. For the name "neighbor" is a relative one, and no one can be neighbor except to a neighbor. And, again, who does not see that no exception is made of any one as a person to whom the offices of mercy may be denied when our Lord extends the rule even to our enemies? "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you."

32. And so also the Apostle Paul teaches when he says: "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Whoever then supposes that the apostle did not embrace every man in this precept, is compelled to admit, what is at once most absurd and most pernicious, that the apostle thought it no sin, if a man were not a Christian or were an enemy, to commit adultery with his wife, or to kill him, or to covet his goods. And as nobody but a fool would say this, it is clear that every man is to be considered our neighbor, because we are to work no ill to any man.

33. But now, if every one to whom we ought to show, or who ought to show to us, the offices of mercy is by right called a neighbor, it is manifest that the command to love our neighbor embraces the holy angels also, seeing that so great offices of mercy have been performed by them on our behalf, as may easily be shown by turning the attention to many passages of Holy Scripture. And on this ground even God Himself, our Lord, desired to be called our neighbor. For our Lord Jesus Christ points to Himself under the figure of the man who brought aid to him who was lying half dead on the

road, wounded and abandoned by the robbers. And the Psalmist says in his prayer, “I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother.” But as the Divine nature is of higher excellence than, and far removed above, our nature, the command to love God is distinct from that to love our neighbor. For He shows us pity on account of His own goodness, but we show pity to one another on account of His;—that is, He pities us that we may fully enjoy Himself; we pity one another that we may fully enjoy Him.

## CHAPTER 31

### GOD USES RATHER THAN ENJOYS US

34. And on this ground, when we say that we enjoy only that which we love for its own sake, and that nothing is a true object of enjoyment except that which makes us happy, and that all other things are for use, there seems still to be something that requires explanation. For God loves us, and Holy Scripture frequently sets before us the love He has towards us. In what way then does He love us? As objects of use or as objects of enjoyment? If He enjoys us, He must be in need of good from us, and no sane man will say that; for all the good we enjoy is either Himself, or what comes from Himself. And no one can be ignorant or in doubt as to the fact that the light stands in no need of the glitter of the things it has itself lit up. The Psalmist says most plainly, “I said to the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou needest not my goodness.” He does not enjoy us then, but makes use of us. For if He neither enjoys nor uses us, I am at a loss to discover in what way He can love us.

## CHAPTER 32

### IN WHAT WAY GOD USES MAN

35. But neither does He use after our fashion of using. For when we use objects, we do so with a view to the full enjoyment of the goodness of God. God, however, in His use of us, has reference to His own goodness. For it is because He is good we exist; and so far as we truly exist we are good. And, further, because He is also just, we cannot with impunity be evil; and so far as we are evil, so far is our existence less complete. Now He is the first and supreme existence, who is altogether unchangeable, and who could say in



the fullest sense of the words, “I AM That I AM,” and “Thou shalt say to them, I AM hath sent me unto you;” so that all other things that exist, both owe their existence entirely to Him, and are good only so far as He has given it to them to be so. That use, then, which God is said to make of us has no reference to His own advantage, but to ours only; and, so far as He is concerned, has reference only to His goodness. When we take pity upon a man and care for him, it is for his advantage we do so; but somehow or other our own advantage follows by a sort of natural consequence, for God does not leave the mercy we show to him who needs it to go without reward. Now this is our highest reward, that we should fully enjoy Him, and that all who enjoy Him should enjoy one another in Him.

## CHAPTER 33

### IN WHAT WAY MAN SHOULD BE ENJOYED

36. For if we find our happiness complete in one another, we stop short upon the road, and place our hope of happiness in man or angel. Now the proud man and the proud angel arrogate this to themselves, and are glad to have the hope of others fixed upon them. But, on the contrary, the holy man and the holy angel, even when we are weary and anxious to stay with them and rest in them, set themselves to recruit our energies with the provision which they have received of God for us or for themselves; and then urge us thus refreshed to go on our way towards Him, in the enjoyment of whom we find our common happiness. For even the apostle exclaims, “Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” and again: “Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” And the angel admonisheth the man who is about to worship him, that he should rather worship Him who is his Master, and under whom he himself is a fellow-servant.

37. But when you have joy of a man in God, it is God rather than man that you enjoy. For you enjoy Him by whom you are made happy, and you rejoice to have come to Him in whose presence you place your hope of joy. And accordingly, Paul says to Philemon, “Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord.” For if he had not added “in the Lord,” but had only said, “Let me have joy of thee,” he would have implied that he fixed his hope of

happiness upon him, although even in the immediate context to “enjoy” is used in the sense of to “use with delight.” For when the thing that we love is near us, it is a matter of course that it should bring delight with it. And if you pass beyond this delight, and make it a means to that which you are permanently to rest in, you are using it, and it is an abuse of language to say that you enjoy it. But if you cling to it, and rest in it, finding your happiness complete in it, then you may be truly and properly said to enjoy it. And this we must never do except in the case of the Blessed Trinity, who is the Supreme and Unchangeable Good.

#### CHAPTER 34

##### CHRIST THE FIRST WAY TO GOD

38. And mark that even when He who is Himself the Truth and the Word, by whom all things were made, had been made flesh that He might dwell among us, the apostle yet says: “Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.” For Christ, desiring not only to give the possession to those who had completed the journey, but also to be Himself the way to those who were just setting out, determined to take a fleshly body. Whence also that expression, “The Lord created me in the beginning of His way,” that is, that those who wished to come might begin their journey in Him. The apostle, therefore, although still on the way, and following after God who called him to the reward of His heavenly calling, yet forgetting those things which were behind, and pressing on towards those things which were before, had already passed over the beginning of the way, and had now no further need of it; yet by this way all must commence their journey who desire to attain to the truth, and to rest in eternal life. For He says: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life;” that is, by me men come, to me they come, in me they rest. For when we come to Him, we come to the Father also, because through an equal an equal is known; and the Holy Spirit binds, and as it were seals us, so that we are able to rest permanently in the supreme and unchangeable Good. And hence we may learn how essential it is that nothing should detain us on the way, when not even our Lord Himself, so far as He has condescended to be our way, is willing to detain us, but wishes us rather to press on; and, instead of weakly clinging to temporal things, even though these have been put on and

worn by Him for our salvation, to pass over them quickly, and to struggle to attain unto Himself, who has freed our nature from the bondage of temporal things, and has set it down at the right hand of His Father.

#### CHAPTER 35

THE FULFILLMENT AND END OF SCRIPTURE IS THE LOVE OF GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOR

39. Of all, then, that has been said since we entered upon the discussion about things, this is the sum: that we should clearly understand that the fulfillment and the end of the Law, and of all Holy Scripture, is the love of an object which is to be enjoyed, and the love of an object which can enjoy that other in fellowship with ourselves. For there is no need of a command that each man should love himself. The whole temporal dispensation for our salvation, therefore, was framed by the providence of God that we might know this truth and be able to act upon it; and we ought to use that dispensation, not with such love and delight as if it were a good to rest in, but with a transient feeling rather, such as we have towards the road, or carriages, or other things that are merely means. Perhaps some other comparison can be found that will more suitably express the idea that we are to love the things by which we are borne only for the sake of that towards which we are borne.

#### CHAPTER 36

THAT INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE WHICH BUILDS US UP IN LOVE IS NOT PERNICIOUSLY DECEPTIVE NOR MENDACIOUS, EVEN THOUGH IT BE FAULTY. THE INTERPRETER, HOWEVER, SHOULD BE CORRECTED

40. Whoever, then, thinks that he understands the Holy Scriptures, or any part of them, but puts such an interpretation upon them as does not tend to build up this twofold love of God and our neighbor, does not yet understand them as he ought. If, on the other hand, a man draws a meaning from them that may be used for the building up of love, even though he does not happen upon the precise meaning which the author whom he reads intended to express in that place, his error is not pernicious, and he is wholly clear from the charge of deception. For there is involved in deception the

intention to say what is false; and we find plenty of people who intend to deceive, but nobody who wishes to be deceived. Since, then, the man who knows practises deceit, and the ignorant man is practised upon, it is quite clear that in any particular case the man who is deceived is a better man than he who deceives, seeing that it is better to suffer than to commit injustice. Now every man who lies commits an injustice; and if any man thinks that a lie is ever useful, he must think that injustice is sometimes useful. For no liar keeps faith in the matter about which he lies. He wishes, of course, that the man to whom he lies should place confidence in him; and yet he betrays his confidence by lying to him. Now every man who breaks faith is unjust. Either, then, injustice is sometimes useful (which is impossible), or a lie is never useful.

41. Whoever takes another meaning out of Scripture than the writer intended, goes astray, but not through any falsehood in Scripture. Nevertheless, as I was going to say, if his mistaken interpretation tends to build up love, which is the end of the commandment, he goes astray in much the same way as a man who by mistake quits the high road, but yet reaches through the fields the same place to which the road leads. He is to be corrected, however, and to be shown how much better it is not to quit the straight road, lest, if he get into a habit of going astray, he may sometimes take cross roads, or even go in the wrong direction altogether.

## CHAPTER 37

### DANGERS OF MISTAKEN INTERPRETATION

For if he takes up rashly a meaning which the author whom he is reading did not intend, he often falls in with other statements which he cannot harmonize with this meaning. And if he admits that these statements are true and certain, then it follows that the meaning he had put upon the former passage cannot be the true one: and so it comes to pass, one can hardly tell how, that, out of love for his own opinion, he begins to feel more angry with Scripture than he is with himself. And if he should once permit that evil to creep in, it will utterly destroy him. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." Now faith will totter if the authority of Scripture begin to shake. And then, if faith totter, love itself will grow cold. For if a man has fallen from

faith, he must necessarily also fall from love; for he cannot love what he does not believe to exist. But if he both believes and loves, then through good works, and through diligent attention to the precepts of morality, he comes to hope also that he shall attain the object of his love. And so these are the three things to which all knowledge and all prophecy are subservient: faith, hope, love.

## CHAPTER 38

### LOVE NEVER FAILETH

42. But sight shall displace faith; and hope shall be swallowed up in that perfect bliss to which we shall come: love, on the other hand, shall wax greater when these others fail. For if we love by faith that which as yet we see not, how much more shall we love it when we begin to see! And if we love by hope that which as yet we have not reached, how much more shall we love it when we reach it! For there is this great difference between things temporal and things eternal, that a temporal object is valued more before we possess it, and begins to prove worthless the moment we attain it, because it does not satisfy the soul, which has its only true and sure resting-place in eternity: an eternal object, on the other hand, is loved with greater ardor when it is in possession than while it is still an object of desire, for no one in his longing for it can set a higher value on it than really belongs to it, so as to think it comparatively worthless when he finds it of less value than he thought; on the contrary, however high the value any man may set upon it when he is on his way to possess it, he will find it, when it comes into his possession, of higher value still.

## CHAPTER 39

### HE WHO IS MATURE IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE, NEEDS SCRIPTURE NO LONGER

43. And thus a man who is resting upon faith, hope and love, and who keeps a firm hold upon these, does not need the Scriptures except for the purpose of instructing others. Accordingly, many live without copies of the Scriptures, even in solitude, on the strength of these three graces. So that in their case, I think, the saying is already fulfilled: "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease;

whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.” Yet by means of these instruments (as they may be called), so great an edifice of faith and love has been built up in them, that, holding to what is perfect, they do not seek for what is only in part perfect—of course, I mean, so far as is possible in this life; for, in comparison with the future life, the life of no just and holy man is perfect here. Therefore the apostle says: “Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity:” because, when a man shall have reached the eternal world, while the other two graces will fail, love will remain greater and more assured.

#### CHAPTER 40

##### WHAT MANNER OF READER SCRIPTURE DEMANDS

44. And, therefore, if a man fully understands that “the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned,” and is bent upon making all his understanding of Scripture to bear upon these three graces, he may come to the interpretation of these books with an easy mind. For while the apostle says “love,” he adds “out of a pure heart,” to provide against anything being loved but that which is worthy of love. And he joins with this “a good conscience,” in reference to hope; for, if a man has the burthen of a bad conscience, he despairs of ever reaching that which he believes in and loves. And in the third place he says: “and of faith unfeigned.” For if our faith is free from all hypocrisy, then we both abstain from loving what is unworthy of our love, and by living uprightly we are able to indulge the hope that our hope shall not be in vain.

For these reasons I have been anxious to speak about the objects of faith, as far as I thought it necessary for my present purpose; for much has already been said on this subject in other volumes, either by others or by myself. And so let this be the end of the present book. In the next I shall discuss, as far as God shall give me light, the subject of signs.

## Book II

Argument—Having completed his exposition of things, the author now proceeds to discuss the subject of signs. He first defines what a sign is, and shows that there are two classes of signs, the natural and the conventional. Of conventional signs (which are the only class here noticed), words are the most numerous and important, and are those with which the interpreter of Scripture is chiefly concerned. The difficulties and obscurities of Scripture spring chiefly from two sources, unknown and ambiguous signs. The present book deals only with unknown signs, the ambiguities of language being reserved for treatment in the next book. The difficulty arising from ignorance of signs is to be removed by learning the Greek and Hebrew languages, in which Scripture is written, by comparing the various translations, and by attending to the context. In the interpretation of figurative expressions, knowledge of things is as necessary as knowledge of words; and the various sciences and arts of the heathen, so far as they are true and useful, may be turned to account in removing our ignorance of signs, whether these be direct or figurative. Whilst exposing the folly and futility of many heathen superstitions and practices, the author points out how all that is sound and useful in their science and philosophy may be turned to a Christian use. And in conclusion, he shows the spirit in which it behoves us to address ourselves to the study and interpretation of the sacred books.

### CHAPTER I

#### SIGNS, THEIR NATURE AND VARIETY

1. As when I was writing about things, I introduced the subject with a warning against attending to anything but what they are in themselves, even though they are signs of something else, so now, when I come in its turn to discuss the subject of signs, I lay down this direction, not to attend to what

they are in themselves, but to the fact that they are signs, that is, to what they signify. For a sign is a thing which, over and above the impression it makes on the senses, causes something else to come into the mind as a consequence of itself: as when we see a footprint, we conclude that an animal whose footprint this is has passed by; and when we see smoke, we know that there is fire beneath; and when we hear the voice of a living man, we think of the feeling in his mind; and when the trumpet sounds, soldiers know that they are to advance or retreat, or do whatever else the state of the battle requires.

2. Now some signs are natural, others conventional. Natural signs are those which, apart from any intention or desire of using them as signs, do yet lead to the knowledge of something else, as, for example, smoke when it indicates fire. For it is not from any intention of making it a sign that it is so, but through attention to experience we come to know that fire is beneath, even when nothing but smoke can be seen. And the footprint of an animal passing by belongs to this class of signs. And the countenance of an angry or sorrowful man indicates the feeling in his mind, independently of his will: and in the same way every other emotion of the mind is betrayed by the tell-tale countenance, even though we do nothing with the intention of making it known. This class of signs, however, it is no part of my design to discuss at present. But as it comes under this division of the subject, I could not altogether pass it over. It will be enough to have noticed it thus far.

## CHAPTER 2

### OF THE KIND OF SIGNS WE ARE NOW CONCERNED WITH

3. Conventional signs, on the other hand, are those which living beings mutually exchange for the purpose of showing, as well as they can, the feelings of their minds, or their perceptions, or their thoughts. Nor is there any reason for giving a sign except the desire of drawing forth and conveying into another's mind what the giver of the sign has in his own mind. We wish, then, to consider and discuss this class of signs so far as men are concerned with it, because even the signs which have been given us of God, and which are contained in the Holy Scriptures, were made



known to us through men—those, namely, who wrote the Scriptures. The beasts, too, have certain signs among themselves by which they make known the desires in their mind. For when the poultry-cock has discovered food, he signals with his voice for the hen to run to him, and the dove by cooing calls his mate, or is called by her in turn; and many signs of the same kind are matters of common observation. Now whether these signs, like the expression or the cry of a man in grief, follow the movement of the mind instinctively and apart from any purpose, or whether they are really used with the purpose of signification, is another question, and does not pertain to the matter in hand. And this part of the subject I exclude from the scope of this work as not necessary to my present object.

### CHAPTER 3

#### AMONG SIGNS, WORDS HOLD THE CHIEF PLACE

4. Of the signs, then, by which men communicate their thoughts to one another, some relate to the sense of sight, some to that of hearing, a very few to the other senses. For, when we nod, we give no sign except to the eyes of the man to whom we wish by this sign to impart our desire. And some convey a great deal by the motion of the hands: and actors by movements of all their limbs give certain signs to the initiated, and, so to speak, address their conversation to the eyes: and the military standards and flags convey through the eyes the will of the commanders. And all these signs are as it were a kind of visible words. The signs that address themselves to the ear are, as I have said, more numerous, and for the most part consist of words. For though the bugle and the flute and the lyre frequently give not only a sweet but a significant sound, yet all these signs are very few in number compared with words. For among men words have obtained far and away the chief place as a means of indicating the thoughts of the mind. Our Lord, it is true, gave a sign through the odor of the ointment which was poured out upon His feet; and in the sacrament of His body and blood He signified His will through the sense of taste; and when by touching the hem of His garment the woman was made whole, the act was not wanting in significance. But the countless multitude of the signs through which men express their thoughts consist of words. For I have been able to put into words all those signs, the various classes of which I have

briefly touched upon, but I could by no effort express words in terms of those signs.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### ORIGIN OF WRITING

5. But because words pass away as soon as they strike upon the air, and last no longer than their sound, men have by means of letters formed signs of words. Thus the sounds of the voice are made visible to the eye, not of course as sounds, but by means of certain signs. It has been found impossible, however, to make those signs common to all nations owing to the sin of discord among men, which springs from every man trying to snatch the chief place for himself. And that celebrated tower which was built to reach to heaven was an indication of this arrogance of spirit; and the ungodly men concerned in it justly earned the punishment of having not their minds only, but their tongues besides, thrown into confusion and discordance.

#### CHAPTER 5

##### SCRIPTURE TRANSLATED INTO VARIOUS LANGUAGES

6. And hence it happened that even Holy Scripture, which brings a remedy for the terrible diseases of the human will, being at first set forth in one language, by means of which it could at the fit season be disseminated through the whole world, was interpreted into various tongues, and spread far and wide, and thus became known to the nations for their salvation. And in reading it, men seek nothing more than to find out the thought and will of those by whom it was written, and through these to find out the will of God, in accordance with which they believe these men to have spoken.

#### CHAPTER 6

##### USE OF THE OBSCURITIES IN SCRIPTURE WHICH ARISE FROM ITS FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

7. But hasty and careless readers are led astray by many and manifold obscurities and ambiguities, substituting one meaning for another; and in

some places they cannot hit upon even a fair interpretation. Some of the expressions are so obscure as to shroud the meaning in the thickest darkness. And I do not doubt that all this was divinely arranged for the purpose of subduing pride by toil, and of preventing a feeling of satiety in the intellect, which generally holds in small esteem what is discovered without difficulty. For why is it, I ask, that if any one says that there are holy and just men whose life and conversation the Church of Christ uses as a means of redeeming those who come to it from all kinds of superstitions, and making them through their imitation of good men members of its own body; men who, as good and true servants of God, have come to the baptismal font laying down the burdens of the world, and who rising thence do, through the implanting of the Holy Spirit, yield the fruit of a two-fold love, a love, that is, of God and their neighbor;—how is it, I say, that if a man says this, he does not please his hearer so much as when he draws the same meaning from that passage in Canticles, where it is said of the Church, when it is being praised under the figure of a beautiful woman, “Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are shorn which came up from the washing, whereof every one bears twins, and none is barren among them?” Does the hearer learn anything more than when he listens to the same thought expressed in the plainest language, without the help of this figure? And yet, I don’t know why, I feel greater pleasure in contemplating holy men, when I view them as the teeth of the Church, tearing men away from their errors, and bringing them into the Church’s body, with all their harshness softened down, just as if they had been torn off and masticated by the teeth. It is with the greatest pleasure, too, that I recognize them under the figure of sheep that have been shorn, laying down the burthens of the world like fleeces, and coming up from the washing, i.e., from baptism, and all bearing twins, i.e., the twin commandments of love, and none among them barren in that holy fruit.

8. But why I view them with greater delight under that aspect than if no such figure were drawn from the sacred books, though the fact would remain the same and the knowledge the same, is another question, and one very difficult to answer. Nobody, however, has any doubt about the facts, both that it is pleasanter in some cases to have knowledge communicated through figures, and that what is attended with difficulty in the seeking

gives greater pleasure in the finding.—For those who seek but do not find suffer from hunger. Those, again, who do not seek at all because they have what they require just beside them often grow languid from satiety. Now weakness from either of these causes is to be avoided. Accordingly the Holy Spirit has, with admirable wisdom and care for our welfare, so arranged the Holy Scriptures as by the plainer passages to satisfy our hunger, and by the more obscure to stimulate our appetite. For almost nothing is dug out of those obscure passages which may not be found set forth in the plainest language elsewhere.

## CHAPTER 7

STEPS TO WISDOM: FIRST, FEAR; SECOND, PIETY; THIRD, KNOWLEDGE; FOURTH, RESOLUTION; FIFTH, COUNSEL; SIXTH, PURIFICATION OF HEART; SEVENTH, STOP OR TERMINATION, WISDOM

9. First of all, then, it is necessary that we should be led by the fear of God to seek the knowledge of His will, what He commands us to desire and what to avoid. Now this fear will of necessity excite in us the thought of our mortality and of the death that is before us, and crucify all the motions of pride as if our flesh were nailed to the tree. Next it is necessary to have our hearts subdued by piety, and not to run in the face of Holy Scripture, whether when understood it strikes at some of our sins, or, when not understood, we feel as if we could be wiser and give better commands ourselves. We must rather think and believe that whatever is there written, even though it be hidden, is better and truer than anything we could devise by our own wisdom.

10. After these two steps of fear and piety, we come to the third step, knowledge, of which I have now undertaken to treat. For in this every earnest student of the Holy Scriptures exercises himself, to find nothing else in them but that God is to be loved for His own sake, and our neighbor for God's sake; and that God is to be loved with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and one's neighbor as one's self—that is, in such a way that all our love for our neighbor, like all our love for ourselves, should have reference to God. And on these two commandments I touched in the previous book when I was treating about things. It is necessary, then, that each man should first of all find in the Scriptures that he, through being

entangled in the love of this world—i.e., of temporal things—has been drawn far away from such a love for God and such a love for his neighbor as Scripture enjoins. Then that fear which leads him to think of the judgment of God, and that piety which gives him no option but to believe in and submit to the authority of Scripture, compel him to bewail his condition. For the knowledge of a good hope makes a man not boastful, but sorrowful. And in this frame of mind he implores with unremitting prayers the comfort of the Divine help that he may not be overwhelmed in despair, and so he gradually comes to the fourth step,—that is, strength and resolution,—in which he hungers and thirsts after righteousness. For in this frame of mind he extricates himself from every form of fatal joy in transitory things, and turning away from these, fixes his affection on things eternal, to wit, the unchangeable Trinity in unity.

11. And when, to the extent of his power, he has gazed upon this object shining from afar, and has felt that owing to the weakness of his sight he cannot endure that matchless light, then in the fifth step—that is, in the counsel of compassion—he cleanses his soul, which is violently agitated, and disturbs him with base desires, from the filth it has contracted. And at this stage he exercises himself diligently in the love of his neighbor; and when he has reached the point of loving his enemy, full of hopes and unbroken in strength, he mounts to the sixth step, in which he purifies the eye itself which can see God, so far as God can be seen by those who as far as possible die to this world. For men see Him just so far as they die to this world; and so far as they live to it they see Him not. But yet, although that light may begin to appear clearer, and not only more tolerable, but even more delightful, still it is only through a glass darkly that we are said to see, because we walk by faith, not by sight, while we continue to wander as strangers in this world, even though our conversation be in heaven. And at this stage, too, a man so purges the eye of his affections as not to place his neighbor before, or even in comparison with, the truth, and therefore not himself, because not him whom he loves as himself. Accordingly, that holy man will be so single and so pure in heart, that he will not step aside from the truth, either for the sake of pleasing men or with a view to avoid any of the annoyances which beset this life. Such a son ascends to wisdom, which is the seventh and last step, and which he enjoys in peace and tranquillity.

For the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. From that beginning, then, till we reach wisdom itself, our way is by the steps now described.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE CANONICAL BOOKS

12. But let us now go back to consider the third step here mentioned, for it is about it that I have set myself to speak and reason as the Lord shall grant me wisdom. The most skillful interpreter of the sacred writings, then, will be he who in the first place has read them all and retained them in his knowledge, if not yet with full understanding, still with such knowledge as reading gives,—those of them, at least, that are called canonical. For he will read the others with greater safety when built up in the belief of the truth, so that they will not take first possession of a weak mind, nor, cheating it with dangerous falsehoods and delusions, fill it with prejudices adverse to a sound understanding. Now, in regard to the canonical Scriptures, he must follow the judgment of the greater number of catholic churches; and among these, of course, a high place must be given to such as have been thought worthy to be the seat of an apostle and to receive epistles. Accordingly, among the canonical Scriptures he will judge according to the following standard: to prefer those that are received by all the catholic churches to those which some do not receive. Among those, again, which are not received by all, he will prefer such as have the sanction of the greater number and those of greater authority, to such as are held by the smaller number and those of less authority. If, however, he shall find that some books are held by the greater number of churches, and others by the churches of greater authority (though this is not a very likely thing to happen), I think that in such a case the authority on the two sides is to be looked upon as equal.

13. Now the whole canon of Scripture on which we say this judgment is to be exercised, is contained in the following books:—Five books of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; one book of Joshua the son of Nun; one of Judges; one short book called Ruth, which seems rather to belong to the beginning of Kings; next, four books of Kings, and two of Chronicles—these last not following one another, but running

parallel, so to speak, and going over the same ground. The books now mentioned are history, which contains a connected narrative of the times, and follows the order of the events. There are other books which seem to follow no regular order, and are connected neither with the order of the preceding books nor with one another, such as Job, and Tobias, and Esther, and Judith, and the two books of Maccabees, and the two of Ezra, which last look more like a sequel to the continuous regular history which terminates with the books of Kings and Chronicles. Next are the Prophets, in which there is one book of the Psalms of David; and three books of Solomon, viz., Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. For two books, one called Wisdom and the other Ecclesiasticus, are ascribed to Solomon from a certain resemblance of style, but the most likely opinion is that they were written by Jesus the son of Sirach. Still they are to be reckoned among the prophetic books, since they have attained recognition as being authoritative. The remainder are the books which are strictly called the Prophets: twelve separate books of the prophets which are connected with one another, and having never been disjoined, are reckoned as one book; the names of these prophets are as follows:—Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; then there are the four greater prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel. The authority of the Old Testament is contained within the limits of these forty-four books. That of the New Testament, again, is contained within the following:—Four books of the Gospel, according to Matthew, according to Mark, according to Luke, according to John; fourteen epistles of the Apostle Paul—one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, two to the Thessalonians, one to the Colossians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews: two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude; and one of James; one book of the Acts of the Apostles; and one of the Revelation of John.

## CHAPTER 9

### HOW WE SHOULD PROCEED IN STUDYING SCRIPTURE

14. In all these books those who fear God and are of a meek and pious disposition seek the will of God. And in pursuing this search the first rule to be observed is, as I said, to know these books, if not yet with the

understanding, still to read them so as to commit them to memory, or at least so as not to remain wholly ignorant of them. Next, those matters that are plainly laid down in them, whether rules of life or rules of faith, are to be searched into more carefully and more diligently; and the more of these a man discovers, the more capacious does his understanding become. For among the things that are plainly laid down in Scripture are to be found all matters that concern faith and the manner of life,—to wit, hope and love, of which I have spoken in the previous book. After this, when we have made ourselves to a certain extent familiar with the language of Scripture, we may proceed to open up and investigate the obscure passages, and in doing so draw examples from the plainer expressions to throw light upon the more obscure, and use the evidence of passages about which there is no doubt to remove all hesitation in regard to the doubtful passages. And in this matter memory counts for a great deal; but if the memory be defective, no rules can supply the want.

## CHAPTER 10

### UNKNOWN OR AMBIGUOUS SIGNS PREVENT SCRIPTURE FROM BEING UNDERSTOOD

15. Now there are two causes which prevent what is written from being understood: its being veiled either under unknown, or under ambiguous signs. Signs are either proper or figurative. They are called proper when they are used to point out the objects they were designed to point out, as we say *bos* when we mean an ox, because all men who with us use the Latin tongue call it by this name. Signs are figurative when the things themselves which we indicate by the proper names are used to signify something else, as we say *bos*, and understand by that syllable the ox, which is ordinarily called by that name; but then further by that ox understand a preacher of the gospel, as Scripture signifies, according to the apostle's explanation, when it says: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."

## CHAPTER 11

### KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES, ESPECIALLY OF GREEK AND HEBREW, NECESSARY TO REMOVE IGNORANCE OR SIGNS



16. The great remedy for ignorance of proper signs is knowledge of languages. And men who speak the Latin tongue, of whom are those I have undertaken to instruct, need two other languages for the knowledge of Scripture, Hebrew and Greek, that they may have recourse to the original texts if the endless diversity of the Latin translators throw them into doubt. Although, indeed, we often find Hebrew words untranslated in the books as for example, Amen, Halleluia, Racha, Hosanna, and others of the same kind. Some of these, although they could have been translated, have been preserved in their original form on account of the more sacred authority that attaches to it, as for example, Amen and Halleluia. Some of them, again, are said to be untranslatable into another tongue, of which the other two I have mentioned are examples. For in some languages there are words that cannot be translated into the idiom of another language. And this happens chiefly in the case of interjections, which are words that express rather an emotion of the mind than any part of a thought we have in our mind. And the two given above are said to be of this kind, Racha expressing the cry of an angry man, Hosanna that of a joyful man. But the knowledge of these languages is necessary, not for the sake of a few words like these which it is very easy to mark and to ask about, but, as has been said, on account of the diversities among translators. For the translations of the Scriptures from Hebrew into Greek can be counted, but the Latin translators are out of all number. For in the early days of the faith every man who happened to get his hands upon a Greek manuscript, and who thought he had any knowledge, were it ever so little, of the two languages, ventured upon the work of translation.

## CHAPTER 12

### A DIVERSITY OF INTERPRETATIONS IS USEFUL. ERRORS ARISING FROM AMBIGUOUS WORDS

17. And this circumstance would assist rather than hinder the understanding of Scripture, if only readers were not careless. For the examination of a number of texts has often thrown light upon some of the more obscure passages; for example, in that passage of the prophet Isaiah, one translator reads: "And do not despise the domestics of thy seed;" another reads: "And do not despise thine own flesh." Each of these in turn confirms the other.

For the one is explained by the other; because “flesh” may be taken in its literal sense, so that a man may understand that he is admonished not to despise his own body; and “the domestics of thy seed” may be understood figuratively of Christians, because they are spiritually born of the same seed as ourselves, namely, the Word. When now the meaning of the two translators is compared, a more likely sense of the words suggests itself, viz., that the command is not to despise our kinsmen, because when one brings the expression “domestics of thy seed” into relation with “flesh,” kinsmen most naturally occur to one’s mind. Whence, I think, that expression of the apostle, when he says, “If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them;” that is, that through emulation of those who had believed, some of them might believe too. And he calls the Jews his “flesh,” on account of the relationship of blood. Again, that passage from the same prophet Isaiah: “If ye will not believe, ye shall not understand,” another has translated: “If ye will not believe, ye shall not abide.” Now which of these is the literal translation cannot be ascertained without reference to the text in the original tongue. And yet to those who read with knowledge, a great truth is to be found in each. For it is difficult for interpreters to differ so widely as not to touch at some point. Accordingly here, as understanding consists in sight, and is abiding, but faith feeds us as babes, upon milk, in the cradles of temporal things (for now we walk by faith, not by sight); as, moreover, unless we walk by faith, we shall not attain to sight, which does not pass away, but abides, our understanding being purified by holding to the truth;—for these reasons one says, “If ye will not believe, ye shall not understand;” but the other, “If ye will not believe, ye shall not abide.”

18. And very often a translator, to whom the meaning is not well known, is deceived by an ambiguity in the original language, and puts upon the passage a construction that is wholly alien to the sense of the writer. As for example, some texts read: “Their feet are sharp to shed blood;” for the word *hozus* among the Greeks means both sharp and swift. And so he saw the true meaning who translated: “Their feet are swift to shed blood.” The other, taking the wrong sense of an ambiguous word, fell into error. Now translations such as this are not obscure, but false; and there is a wide difference between the two things. For we must learn not to interpret, but to

correct texts of this sort. For the same reason it is, that because the Greek word *moschos* means a calf, some have not understood that *moscheumata* are shoots of trees, and have translated the word “calves;” and this error has crept into so many texts, that you can hardly find it written in any other way. And yet the meaning is very clear; for it is made evident by the words that follow. For “the plantings of an adulterer will not take deep root,” is a more suitable form of expression than the “calves;” because these walk upon the ground with their feet, and are not fixed in the earth by roots. In this passage, indeed, the rest of the context also justifies this translation.

## CHAPTER 13

### HOW FAULTY INTERPRETATIONS CAN BE EMENDED

19. But since we do not clearly see what the actual thought is which the several translators endeavor to express, each according to his own ability and judgment, unless we examine it in the language which they translate; and since the translator, if he be not a very learned man, often departs from the meaning of his author, we must either endeavor to get a knowledge of those languages from which the Scriptures are translated into Latin, or we must get hold of the translations of those who keep rather close to the letter of the original, not because these are sufficient, but because we may use them to correct the freedom or the error of others, who in their translations have chosen to follow the sense quite as much as the words. For not only single words, but often whole phrases are translated, which could not be translated at all into the Latin idiom by any one who wished to hold by the usage of the ancients who spoke Latin. And though these sometimes do not interfere with the understanding of the passage, yet they are offensive to those who feel greater delight in things when even the signs of those things are kept in their own purity. For what is called a solecism is nothing else than the putting of words together according to a different rule from that which those of our predecessors who spoke with any authority followed. For whether we say *inter homines* (among men) or *inter hominibus*, is of no consequence to a man who only wishes to know the facts. And in the same way, what is a barbarism but the pronouncing of a word in a different way from that in which those who spoke Latin before us pronounced it? For whether the word *ignoscere* (to pardon) should be pronounced with the third

syllable long or short, is not a matter of much concern to the man who is beseeching God, in any way at all that he can get the words out, to pardon his sins. What then is purity of speech, except the preserving of the custom of language established by the authority of former speakers?

20. And men are easily offended in a matter of this kind, just in proportion as they are weak; and they are weak just in proportion as they wish to seem learned, not in the knowledge of things which tend to edification, but in that of signs, by which it is hard not to be puffed up, seeing that the knowledge of things even would often set up our neck, if it were not held down by the yoke of our Master. For how does it prevent our understanding it to have the following passage thus expressed: “*Quae est terra in quo isti insidunt super eam, si bona est an nequam; et quae sunt civitates, in quibus ipsi inhabitant in ipsis?*” And I am more disposed to think that this is simply the idiom of another language than that any deeper meaning is intended. Again, that phrase, which we cannot now take away from the lips of the people who sing it: “*Super ipsum autem floriet sanctificatio mea,*” surely takes away nothing from the meaning. Yet a more learned man would prefer that this should be corrected, and that we should say, not *floriet*, but *florebit*. Nor does anything stand in the way of the correction being made, except the usage of the singers. Mistakes of this kind, then, if a man do not choose to avoid them altogether, it is easy to treat with indifference, as not interfering with a right understanding. But take, on the other hand, the saying of the apostle: “*Quod stultum est Dei, sapientius est hominibus, et quod infirmum est Dei, fortius est hominibus.*” If any one should retain in this passage the Greek idiom, and say, “*Quod stultum est Dei, sapientius est hominum et quod infirmum est Dei fortius est hominum,*” a quick and careful reader would indeed by an effort attain to the true meaning, but still a man of slower intelligence either would not understand it at all, or would put an utterly false construction upon it. For not only is such a form of speech faulty in the Latin tongue, but it is ambiguous too, as if the meaning might be, that the folly of men or the weakness of men is wiser or stronger than that of God. But indeed even the expression *sapientius est hominibus* (stronger than men) is not free from ambiguity, even though it be free from solecism. For whether *hominibus* is put as the plural of the dative or as the plural of the ablative, does not appear, unless by reference to the meaning.

It would be better then to say, *sapientius est quam homines*, and *fortius est quam homines*.

#### CHAPTER 14

##### HOW THE MEANING OF UNKNOWN WORDS AND IDIOMS IS TO BE DISCOVERED

21. About ambiguous signs, however, I shall speak afterwards. I am treating at present of unknown signs, of which, as far as the words are concerned, there are two kinds. For either a word or an idiom, of which the reader is ignorant, brings him to a stop. Now if these belong to foreign tongues, we must either make inquiry about them from men who speak those tongues, or if we have leisure we must learn the tongues ourselves, or we must consult and compare several translators. If, however, there are words or idioms in our own tongue that we are unacquainted with, we gradually come to know them through being accustomed to read or to hear them. There is nothing that it is better to commit to memory than those kinds of words and phrases whose meaning we do not know, so that where we happen to meet either with a more learned man of whom we can inquire, or with a passage that shows, either by the preceding or succeeding context, or by both, the force and significance of the phrase we are ignorant of, we can easily by the help of our memory turn our attention to the matter and learn all about it. So great, however, is the force of custom, even in regard to learning, that those who have been in a sort of way nurtured and brought up on the study of Holy Scripture, are surprised at other forms of speech, and think them less pure Latin than those which they have learnt from Scripture, but which are not to be found in Latin authors. In this matter, too, the great number of the translators proves a very great assistance, if they are examined and discussed with a careful comparison of their texts. Only all positive error must be removed. For those who are anxious to know, the Scriptures ought in the first place to use their skill in the correction of the texts, so that the uncorrected ones should give way to the corrected, at least when they are copies of the same translation.

#### CHAPTER 15

##### AMONG VERSIONS A PREFERENCE IS GIVEN TO THE SEPTUAGINT AND THE ITALIA

22. Now among translations themselves the Italian (Itala) is to be preferred to the others, for it keeps closer to the words without prejudice to clearness of expression. And to correct the Latin we must use the Greek versions, among which the authority of the Septuagint is pre-eminent as far as the Old Testament is concerned; for it is reported through all the more learned churches that the seventy translators enjoyed so much of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in their work of translation, that among that number of men there was but one voice. And if, as is reported, and as many not unworthy of confidence assert, they were separated during the work of translation, each man being in a cell by himself, and yet nothing was found in the manuscript of any one of them that was not found in the same words and in the same order of words in all the rest, who dares put anything in comparison with an authority like this, not to speak of preferring anything to it? And even if they conferred together with the result that a unanimous agreement sprang out of the common labor and judgment of them all; even so, it would not be right or becoming for any one man, whatever his experience, to aspire to correct the unanimous opinion of many venerable and learned men. Wherefore, even if anything is found in the original Hebrew in a different form from that in which these men have expressed it, I think we must give way to the dispensation of Providence which used these men to bring it about, that books which the Jewish race were unwilling, either from religious scruple or from jealousy, to make known to other nations, were, with the assistance of the power of King Ptolemy, made known so long beforehand to the nations which in the future were to believe in the Lord. And thus it is possible that they translated in such a way as the Holy Spirit, who worked in them and had given them all one voice, thought most suitable for the Gentiles. But nevertheless, as I said above, a comparison of those translators also who have kept most closely to the words, is often not without value as a help to the clearing up of the meaning. The Latin texts, therefore, of the Old Testament are, as I was about to say, to be corrected if necessary by the authority of the Greeks, and especially by that of those who, though they were seventy in number, are said to have translated as with one voice. As to the books of the New Testament, again, if any perplexity arises from the diversities of the Latin texts, we must of course yield to the Greek, especially those that are found in the churches of greater learning and research.

## CHAPTER 16

### THE KNOWLEDGE BOTH OF LANGUAGE AND THINGS IS HELPFUL FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS

23. In the case of figurative signs, again, if ignorance of any of them should chance to bring the reader to a stand-still, their meaning is to be traced partly by the knowledge of languages, partly by the knowledge of things. The pool of Siloam, for example, where the man whose eyes our Lord had anointed with clay made out of spittle was commanded to wash, has a figurative significance, and undoubtedly conveys a secret sense; but yet if the evangelist had not interpreted that name, a meaning so important would lie unnoticed. And we cannot doubt that, in the same way, many Hebrew names which have not been interpreted by the writers of those books, would, if any one could interpret them, be of great value and service in solving the enigmas of Scripture. And a number of men skilled in that language have conferred no small benefit on posterity by explaining all these words without reference to their place in Scripture, and telling us what Adam means, what Eve, what Abraham, what Moses, and also the names of places, what Jerusalem signifies, or Sion, or Sinai, or Lebanon, or Jordan, and whatever other names in that language we are not acquainted with. And when these names have been investigated and explained, many figurative expressions in Scripture become clear.

24. Ignorance of things, too, renders figurative expressions obscure, as when we do not know the nature of the animals, or minerals, or plants, which are frequently referred to in Scripture by way of comparison. The fact so well known about the serpent, for example, that to protect its head it will present its whole body to its assailants—how much light it throws upon the meaning of our Lord's command, that we should be wise as serpents; that is to say, that for the sake of our head, which is Christ, we should willingly offer our body to the persecutors, lest the Christian faith should, as it were, be destroyed in us, if to save the body we deny our God! Or again, the statement that the serpent gets rid of its old skin by squeezing itself through a narrow hole, and thus acquires new strength—how appropriately it fits in with the direction to imitate the wisdom of the serpent, and to put off the old man, as the apostle says, that we may put on the new; and to put

it off, too, by coming through a narrow place, according to the saying of our Lord, "Enter ye in at the strait gate!" As, then, knowledge of the nature of the serpent throws light upon many metaphors which Scripture is accustomed to draw from that animal, so ignorance of other animals, which are no less frequently mentioned by way of comparison, is a very great drawback to the reader. And so in regard to minerals and plants: knowledge of the carbuncle, for instance, which shines in the dark, throws light upon many of the dark places in books too, where it is used metaphorically; and ignorance of the beryl or the adamant often shuts the doors of knowledge. And the only reason why we find it easy to understand that perpetual peace is indicated by the olive branch which the dove brought with it when it returned to the ark, is that we know both that the smooth touch of olive oil is not easily spoiled by a fluid of another kind, and that the tree itself is an evergreen. Many, again, by reason of their ignorance of hyssop, not knowing the virtue it has in cleansing the lungs, nor the power it is said to have of piercing rocks with its roots, although it is a small and insignificant plant, cannot make out why it is said, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean."

25. Ignorance of numbers, too, prevents us from understanding things that are set down in Scripture in a figurative and mystical way. A candid mind, if I may so speak, cannot but be anxious, for example, to ascertain what is meant by the fact that Moses and Elijah, and our Lord Himself, all fasted for forty days. And except by knowledge of and reflection upon the number, the difficulty of explaining the figure involved in this action cannot be got over. For the number contains ten four times, indicating the knowledge of all things, and that knowledge interwoven with time. For both the diurnal and the annual revolutions are accomplished in periods numbering four each; the diurnal in the hours of the morning, the noontide, the evening, and the night; the annual in the spring, summer, autumn, and winter months. Now while we live in time, we must abstain and fast from all joy in time, for the sake of that eternity in which we wish to live; although by the passage of time we are taught this very lesson of despising time and seeking eternity. Further, the number ten signifies the knowledge of the Creator and the creature, for there is a trinity in the Creator; and the number seven indicates the creature, because of the life and the body. For the life consists



of three parts, whence also God is to be loved with the whole heart, the whole soul, and the whole mind; and it is very clear that in the body there are four elements of which it is made up. In this number ten, therefore, when it is placed before us in connection with time, that is, when it is taken four times we are admonished to live unstained by, and not partaking of, any delight in time, that is, to fast for forty days. Of this we are admonished by the law personified in Moses, by prophecy personified in Elijah, and by our Lord Himself, who, as if receiving the witness both of the law and the prophets, appeared on the mount between the other two, while His three disciples looked on in amazement. Next, we have to inquire in the same way, how out of the number forty springs the number fifty, which in our religion has no ordinary sacredness attached to it on account of the Pentecost, and how this number taken thrice on account of the three divisions of time, before the law, under the law, and under grace, or perhaps on account of the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Trinity itself being added over and above, has reference to the mystery of the most Holy Church, and reaches to the number of the one hundred and fifty-three fishes which were taken after the resurrection of our Lord, when the nets were cast out on the right-hand side of the boat. And in the same way, many other numbers and combinations of numbers are used in the sacred writings, to convey instruction under a figurative guise, and ignorance of numbers often shuts out the reader from this instruction.

26. Not a few things, too, are closed against us and obscured by ignorance of music. One man, for example, has not unskillfully explained some metaphors from the difference between the psaltery and the harp. And it is a question which it is not out of place for learned men to discuss, whether there is any musical law that compels the psaltery of ten chords to have just so many strings; or whether, if there be no such law, the number itself is not on that very account the more to be considered as of sacred significance, either with reference to the ten commandments of the law (and if again any question is raised about that number, we can only refer it to the Creator and the creature), or with reference to the number ten itself as interpreted above. And the number of years the temple was in building, which is mentioned in the gospel—viz., forty-six—has a certain undefinable musical sound, and when referred to the structure of our Lord's body, in relation to which the

temple was mentioned, compels many heretics to confess that our Lord put on, not a false, but a true and human body. And in several places in the Holy Scriptures we find both numbers and music mentioned with honor.

## CHAPTER 17

### ORIGIN OF THE LEGEND OF THE NINE MUSES

27. For we must not listen to the falsities of heathen superstition, which represent the nine Muses as daughters of Jupiter and Mercury. Varro refutes these, and I doubt whether any one can be found among them more curious or more learned in such matters. He says that a certain state (I don't recollect the name) ordered from each of three artists a set of statues of the Muses, to be placed as an offering in the temple of Apollo, intending that whichever of the artists produced the most beautiful statues, they should select and purchase from him. It so happened that these artists executed their works with equal beauty, that all nine pleased the state, and that all were bought to be dedicated in the temple of Apollo; and he says that afterwards Hesiod the poet gave names to them all. It was not Jupiter, therefore, that begat the nine Muses, but three artists created three each. And the state had originally given the order for three, not because it had seen them in visions, nor because they had presented themselves in that number to the eyes of any of the citizens, but because it was obvious to remark that all sound, which is the material of song, is by nature of three kinds. For it is either produced by the voice, as in the case of those who sing with the mouth without an instrument; or by blowing, as in the case of trumpets and flutes; or by striking, as in the case of harps and drums, and all other instruments that give their sound when struck.

## CHAPTER 18

### NO HELP IS TO BE DESPISED, EVEN THOUGH IT COME FROM A PROFANE SOURCE

28. But whether the fact is as Varro has related, or is not so, still we ought not to give up music because of the superstition of the heathen, if we can derive anything from it that is of use for the understanding of Holy Scripture; nor does it follow that we must busy ourselves with their theatrical trumpery because we enter upon an investigation about harps and

other instruments, that may help us to lay hold upon spiritual things. For we ought not to refuse to learn letters because they say that Mercury discovered them; nor because they have dedicated temples to Justice and Virtue, and prefer to worship in the form of stones things that ought to have their place in the heart, ought we on that account to forsake justice and virtue. Nay, but let every good and true Christian understand that wherever truth may be found, it belongs to his Master; and while he recognizes and acknowledges the truth, even in their religious literature, let him reject the figments of superstition, and let him grieve over and avoid men who, “when they knew God, glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.”

## CHAPTER 19

### TWO KINDS OF HEATHEN KNOWLEDGE

29. But to explain more fully this whole topic (for it is one that cannot be omitted), there are two kinds of knowledge which are in vogue among the heathen. One is the knowledge of things instituted by men, the other of things which they have noted, either as transacted in the past or as instituted by God. The former kind, that which deals with human institutions, is partly superstitious, partly not.

## CHAPTER 20

### THE SUPERSTITIOUS NATURE OF HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

30. All the arrangements made by men for the making and worshipping of idols are superstitious, pertaining as they do either to the worship of what is created or of some part of it as God, or to consultations and arrangements about signs and leagues with devils, such, for example, as are employed in the magical arts, and which the poets are accustomed not so much to teach as to celebrate. And to this class belong, but with a bolder reach of deception, the books of the haruspices and augurs. In this class we must place also all amulets and cures which the medical art condemns, whether

these consist in incantations, or in marks which they call characters, or in hanging or tying on or even dancing in a fashion certain articles, not with reference to the condition of the body, but to certain signs hidden or manifest; and these remedies they call by the less offensive name of physica, so as to appear not to be engaged in superstitious observances, but to be taking advantage of the forces of nature. Examples of these are the earrings on the top of each ear, or the rings of ostrich bone on the fingers, or telling you when you hiccup to hold your left thumb in your right hand.

31. To these we may add thousands of the most frivolous practices, that are to be observed if any part of the body should jump, or if, when friends are walking arm-in-arm, a stone, or a dog, or a boy, should come between them. And the kicking of a stone, as if it were a divider of friends, does less harm than to cuff an innocent boy if he happens to run between men who are walking side by side. But it is delightful that the boys are sometimes avenged by the dogs; for frequently men are so superstitious as to venture upon striking a dog who has run between them,—not with impunity however, for instead of a superstitious remedy, the dog sometimes makes his assailant run in hot haste for a real surgeon. To this class, too, belong the following rules: To tread upon the threshold when you go out in front of the house; to go back to bed if any one should sneeze when you are putting on your slippers; to return home if you stumble when going to a place; when your clothes are eaten by mice, to be more frightened at the prospect of coming misfortune than grieved by your present loss. Whence that witty saying of Cato, who, when consulted by a man who told him that the mice had eaten his boots, replied, “That is not strange, but it would have been very strange indeed if the boots had eaten the mice.”

## CHAPTER 21

### SUPERSTITION OF ASTROLOGERS

32. Nor can we exclude from this kind of superstition those who were called genethliaci, on account of their attention to birthdays, but are now commonly called mathematici. For these, too, although they may seek with pains for the true position of the stars at the time of our birth, and may sometimes even find it out, yet in so far as they attempt thence to predict

our actions, or the consequences of our actions, grievously err, and sell inexperienced men into a miserable bondage. For when any freeman goes to an astrologer of this kind, he gives money that he may come away the slave either of Mars or of Venus, or rather, perhaps, of all the stars to which those who first fell into this error, and handed it on to posterity, have given the names either of beasts on account of their likeness to beasts, or of men with a view to confer honor on those men. And this is not to be wondered at, when we consider that even in times more recent and nearer our own, the Romans made an attempt to dedicate the star which we call Lucifer to the name and honor of Caesar. And this would, perhaps, have been done, and the name handed down to distant ages, only that his ancestress Venus had given her name to this star before him, and could not by any law transfer to her heirs what she had never possessed, nor sought to possess, in life. For where a place was vacant, or not held in honor of any of the dead of former times, the usual proceeding in such cases was carried out. For example, we have changed the names of the months Quintilis and Sextilis to July and August, naming them in honor of the men Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar; and from this instance any one who cares can easily see that the stars spoken of above formerly wandered in the heavens without the names they now bear. But as the men were dead whose memory people were either compelled by royal power or impelled by human folly to honor, they seemed to think that in putting their names upon the stars they were raising the dead men themselves to heaven. But whatever they may be called by men, still there are stars which God has made and set in order after His own pleasure, and they have a fixed movement, by which the seasons are distinguished and varied. And when any one is born, it is easy to observe the point at which this movement has arrived, by use of the rules discovered and laid down by those who are rebuked by Holy Writ in these terms: “For if they were able to know so much that they could weigh the world, how did they not more easily find out the Lord thereof?”

## CHAPTER 22

### THE FOLLY OF OBSERVING THE STARS IN ORDER TO PREDICT THE EVENTS OF A LIFE

33. But to desire to predict the characters, the acts, and the fate of those who are born from such an observation, is a great delusion and great

madness. And among those at least who have any sort of acquaintance with matters of this kind (which, indeed, are only fit to be unlearned again), this superstition is refuted beyond the reach of doubt. For the observation is of the position of the stars, which they call constellations, at the time when the person was born about whom these wretched men are consulted by their still more wretched dupes. Now it may happen that, in the case of twins, one follows the other out of the womb so closely that there is no interval of time between them that can be apprehended and marked in the position of the constellations. Whence it necessarily follows that twins are in many cases born under the same stars, while they do not meet with equal fortune either in what they do or what they suffer, but often meet with fates so different that one of them has a most fortunate life, the other a most unfortunate. As, for example, we are told that Esau and Jacob were born twins, and in such close succession, that Jacob, who was born last, was found to have laid hold with his hand upon the heel of his brother, who preceded him. Now, assuredly, the day and hour of the birth of these two could not be marked in any way that would not give both the same constellation. But what a difference there was between the characters, the actions, the labors, and the fortunes of these two, the Scriptures bear witness, which are now so widely spread as to be in the mouth of all nations.

34. Nor is it to the point to say that the very smallest and briefest moment of time that separates the birth of twins, produces great effects in nature, and in the extremely rapid motion of the heavenly bodies. For, although I may grant that it does produce the greatest effects, yet the astrologer cannot discover this in the constellations, and it is by looking into these that he professes to read the fates. If, then, he does not discover the difference when he examines the constellations, which must, of course, be the same whether he is consulted about Jacob or his brother, what does it profit him that there is a difference in the heavens, which he rashly and carelessly brings into disrepute, when there is no difference in his chart, which he looks into anxiously but in vain? And so these notions also, which have their origin in certain signs of things being arbitrarily fixed upon by the presumption of men, are to be referred to the same class as if they were leagues and covenants with devils.

WHY WE REPUDIATE ARTS OF DIVINATION

35. For in this way it comes to pass that men who lust after evil things are, by a secret judgment of God, delivered over to be mocked and deceived, as the just reward of their evil desires. For they are deluded and imposed on by the false angels, to whom the lowest part of the world has been put in subjection by the law of God's providence, and in accordance with His most admirable arrangement of things. And the result of these delusions and deceptions is, that through these superstitious and baneful modes of divination many things in the past and future are made known, and turn out just as they are foretold and in the case of those who practise superstitious observances, many things turn out agreeably to their observances, and ensnared by these successes, they become more eagerly inquisitive, and involve themselves further and further in a labyrinth of most pernicious error. And to our advantage, the Word of God is not silent about this species of fornication of the soul; and it does not warn the soul against following such practices on the ground that those who profess them speak lies, but it says, "Even if what they tell you should come to pass, hearken not unto them." For though the ghost of the dead Samuel foretold the truth to King Saul, that does not make such sacrilegious observances as those by which his ghost was brought up the less detestable; and though the ventriloquist woman in the Acts of the Apostles bore true testimony to the apostles of the Lord, the Apostle Paul did not spare the evil spirit on that account, but rebuked and cast it out, and so made the woman clean.

36. All arts of this sort, therefore, are either nullities, or are part of a guilty superstition, springing out of a baleful fellowship between men and devils, and are to be utterly repudiated and avoided by the Christian as the covenants of a false and treacherous friendship. "Not as if the idol were anything," says the apostle; "but because the things which they sacrifice they sacrifice to devils and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils." Now what the apostle has said about idols and the sacrifices offered in their honor, that we ought to feel in regard to all fancied signs which lead either to the worship of idols, or to worshipping creation or its parts instead of God, or which are connected with attention to

medicinal charms and other observances for these are not appointed by God as the public means of promoting love towards God and our neighbor, but they waste the hearts of wretched men in private and selfish strivings after temporal things. Accordingly, in regard to all these branches of knowledge, we must fear and shun the fellowship of demons, who, with the Devil their prince, strive only to shut and bar the door against our return. As, then, from the stars which God created and ordained, men have drawn lying omens of their own fancy, so also from things that are born, or in any other way come into existence under the government of God's providence, if there chance only to be something unusual in the occurrence,—as when a mule brings forth young, or an object is struck by lightning,—men have frequently drawn omens by conjectures of their own, and have committed them to writing, as if they had drawn them by rule.

#### CHAPTER 24

##### THE INTERCOURSE AND AGREEMENT WITH DEMONS WHICH SUPERSTITIOUS OBSERVANCES MAINTAIN

37. And all these omens are of force just so far as has been arranged with the devils by that previous understanding in the mind which is, as it were, the common language, but they are all full of hurtful curiosity, torturing anxiety, and deadly slavery. For it was not because they had meaning that they were attended to, but it was by attending to and marking them that they came to have meaning. And so they are made different for different people, according to their several notions and prejudices. For those spirits which are bent upon deceiving, take care to provide for each person the same sort of omens as they see his own conjectures and preconceptions have already entangled him in. For, to take an illustration, the same figure of the letter X, which is made in the shape of a cross, means one thing among the Greeks and another among the Latins, not by nature, but by agreement and pre-arrangement as to its signification; and so, any one who knows both languages uses this letter in a different sense when writing to a Greek from that in which he uses it when writing to a Latin. And the same sound, beta, which is the name of a letter among the Greeks, is the name of a vegetable among the Latins; and when I say, lege, these two syllables mean one thing to a Greek and another to a Latin. Now, just as all these signs affect the



mind according to the arrangements of the community in which each man lives, and affect different men's minds differently, because these arrangements are different; and as, further, men did not agree upon them as signs because they were already significant, but on the contrary they are now significant because men have agreed upon them; in the same way also, those signs by which the ruinous intercourse with devils is maintained have meaning just in proportion to each man's observations. And this appears quite plainly in the rites of the augurs; for they, both before they observe the omens and after they have completed their observations, take pains not to see the flight or hear the cries of birds, because these omens are of no significance apart from the previous arrangement in the mind of the observer.

## CHAPTER 25

IN HUMAN INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE NOT SUPERSTITIOUS, THERE ARE SOME THINGS SUPERFLUOUS AND SOME CONVENIENT AND NECESSARY

38. But when all these have been cut away and rooted out of the mind of the Christian we must then look at human institutions which are not superstitious, that is, such as are not set up in association with devils, but by men in association with one another. For all arrangements that are in force among men, because they have agreed among themselves that they should be in force, are human institutions; and of these, some are matters of superfluity and luxury, some of convenience and necessity. For if those signs which the actors make in dancing were of force by nature, and not by the arrangement and agreement of men, the public crier would not in former times have announced to the people of Carthage, while the pantomime was dancing, what it was he meant to express,—a thing still remembered by many old men from whom we have frequently heard it. And we may well believe this, because even now, if any one who is unaccustomed to such follies goes into the theatre, unless some one tells him what these movements mean, he will give his whole attention to them in vain. Yet all men aim at a certain degree of likeness in their choice of signs, that the signs may as far as possible be like the things they signify. But because one thing may resemble another in many ways, such signs are not always of the

same significance among men, except when they have mutually agreed upon them.

39. But in regard to pictures and statues, and other works of this kind, which are intended as representations of things, nobody makes a mistake, especially if they are executed by skilled artists, but every one, as soon as he sees the likenesses, recognizes the things they are likenesses of. And this whole class are to be reckoned among the superfluous devices of men, unless when it is a matter of importance to inquire in regard to any of them, for what reason, where, when, and by whose authority it was made. Finally, the thousands of fables and fictions, in whose lies men take delight, are human devices, and nothing is to be considered more peculiarly man's own and derived from himself than anything that is false and lying. Among the convenient and necessary arrangements of men with men are to be reckoned whatever differences they choose to make in bodily dress and ornament for the purpose of distinguishing sex or rank; and the countless varieties of signs without which human intercourse either could not be carried on at all, or would be carried on at great inconvenience; and the arrangements as to weights and measures, and the stamping and weighing of coins, which are peculiar to each state and people, and other things of the same kind. Now these, if they were not devices of men, would not be different in different nations, and could not be changed among particular nations at the discretion of their respective sovereigns.

40. This whole class of human arrangements, which are of convenience for the necessary intercourse of life, the Christian is not by any means to neglect, but on the contrary should pay a sufficient degree of attention to them, and keep them in memory.

## CHAPTER 26

### WHAT HUMAN CONTRIVANCES WE ARE TO ADOPT, AND WHAT WE ARE TO AVOID

For certain institutions of men are in a sort of way representations and likenesses of natural objects. And of these, such as have relation to fellowship with devils must, as has been said, be utterly rejected and held in detestation; those, on the other hand, which relate to the mutual intercourse

of men, are, so far as they are not matters of luxury and superfluity, to be adopted, especially the forms of the letters which are necessary for reading, and the various languages as far as is required—a matter I have spoken of above. To this class also belong shorthand characters, those who are acquainted with which are called shorthand writers. All these are useful, and there is nothing unlawful in learning them, nor do they involve us in superstition, or enervate us by luxury, if they only occupy our minds so far as not to stand in the way of more important objects to which they ought to be subservient.

## CHAPTER 27

### SOME DEPARTMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE, NOT OF MERE HUMAN INVENTION, AID US IN INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE

41. But, coming to the next point, we are not to reckon among human institutions those things which men have handed down to us, not as arrangements of their own, but as the result of investigation into the occurrences of the past, and into the arrangements of God's providence. And of these, some pertain to the bodily senses, some to the intellect. Those which are reached by the bodily senses we either believe on testimony, or perceive when they are pointed out to us, or infer from experience.

## CHAPTER 28

### TO WHAT EXTENT HISTORY IS AN AID

42. Anything, then, that we learn from history about the chronology of past times assists us very much in understanding the Scriptures, even if it be learnt without the pale of the Church as a matter of childish instruction. For we frequently seek information about a variety of matters by use of the Olympiads, and the names of the consuls; and ignorance of the consulship in which our Lord was born, and that in which He suffered, has led some into the error of supposing that He was forty-six years of age when He suffered, that being the number of years He was told by the Jews the temple (which He took as a symbol of His body) was in building. Now we know on the authority of the evangelist that He was about thirty years of age when He was baptized; but the number of years He lived afterwards, although by

putting His actions together we can make it out, yet that no shadow of doubt might arise from another source, can be ascertained more clearly and more certainly from a comparison of profane history with the gospel. It will still be evident, however, that it was not without a purpose it was said that the temple was forty and six years in building; so that, as more secret formation of the body which, for our sakes, the only-begotten Son of God, by whom all things were made, condescended to put on.

43. As to the utility of history, moreover, passing over the Greeks, what a great question our own Ambrose has set at rest! For, when the readers and admirers of Plato dared calumniously to assert that our Lord Jesus Christ learnt all those sayings of His, which they are compelled to admire and praise, from the books of Plato—because (they urged) it cannot be denied that Plato lived long before the coming of our Lord!—did not the illustrious bishop, when by his investigations into profane history he had discovered that Plato made a journey into Egypt at the time when Jeremiah the prophet was there, show that it is much more likely that Plato was through Jeremiah's means initiated into our literature, so as to be able to teach and write those views of his which are so justly praised? For not even Pythagoras himself, from whose successors these men assert Plato learnt theology, lived at a date prior to the books of that Hebrew race, among whom the worship of one God sprang up, and of whom as concerning the flesh our Lord came. And thus, when we reflect upon the dates, it becomes much more probable that those philosophers learnt whatever they said that was good and true from our literature, than that the Lord Jesus Christ learnt from the writings of Plato,—a thing which it is the height of folly to believe.

44. And even when in the course of an historical narrative former institutions of men are described, the history itself is not to be reckoned among human institutions; because things that are past and gone and cannot be undone are to be reckoned as belonging to the course of time, of which God is the author and governor. For it is one thing to tell what has been done, another to show what ought to be done. History narrates what has been done, faithfully and with advantage; but the books of the haruspices,

and all writings of the same kind, aim at teaching what ought to be done or observed, using the boldness of an adviser, not the fidelity of a narrator.

## CHAPTER 29

### TO WHAT EXTENT NATURAL SCIENCE IS AN EXEGETICAL AID

45. There is also a species of narrative resembling description, in which not a past but an existing state of things is made known to those who are ignorant of it. To this species belongs all that has been written about the situation of places, and the nature of animals, trees, herbs, stones, and other bodies. And of this species I have treated above, and have shown that this kind of knowledge is serviceable in solving the difficulties of Scripture, not that these objects are to be used conformably to certain signs as nostrums or the instruments of superstition; for that kind of knowledge I have already set aside as distinct from the lawful and free kind now spoken of. For it is one thing to say: If you bruise down this herb and drink it, it will remove the pain from your stomach; and another to say: If you hang this herb round your neck, it will remove the pain from your stomach. In the former case the wholesome mixture is approved of, in the latter the superstitious charm is condemned; although indeed, where incantations and invocations and marks are not used, it is frequently doubtful whether the thing that is tied or fixed in any way to the body to cure it, acts by a natural virtue, in which case it may be freely used; or acts by a sort of charm, in which case it becomes the Christian to avoid it the more carefully, the more efficacious it may seem to be. But when the reason why a thing is of virtue does not appear, the intention with which it is used is of great importance, at least in healing or in tempering bodies, whether in medicine or in agriculture.

46. The knowledge of the stars, again, is not a matter of narration, but of description. Very few of these, however, are mentioned in Scripture. And as the course of the moon, which is regularly employed in reference to celebrating the anniversary of our Lord's passion, is known to most people; so the rising and setting and other movements of the rest of the heavenly bodies are thoroughly known to very few. And this knowledge, although in itself it involves no superstition, renders very little, indeed almost no assistance, in the interpretation of Holy Scripture, and by engaging the

attention unprofitably is a hindrance rather; and as it is closely related to the very pernicious error of the diviners of the fates, it is more convenient and becoming to neglect it. It involves, moreover, in addition to a description of the present state of things, something like a narrative of the past also; because one may go back from the present position and motion of the stars, and trace by rule their past movements. It involves also regular anticipations of the future, not in the way of forebodings and omens, but by way of sure calculation; not with the design of drawing any information from them as to our own acts and fates, in the absurd fashion of the *genethliaci*, but only as to the motions of the heavenly bodies themselves. For, as the man who computes the moon's age can tell, when he has found out her age today, what her age was any number of years ago, or what will be her age any number of years hence, in just the same way men who are skilled in such computations are accustomed to answer like questions about every one of the heavenly bodies. And I have stated what my views are about all this knowledge, so far as regards its utility.

#### CHAPTER 30

##### WHAT THE MECHANICAL ARTS CONTRIBUTE TO EXEGETICS

47. Further, as to the remaining arts, whether those by which something is made which, when the effort of the workman is over, remains as a result of his work, as, for example, a house, a bench, a dish, and other things of that kind; or those which, so to speak, assist God in His operations, as medicine, and agriculture, and navigation; or those whose sole result is an action, as dancing, and racing, and wrestling;—in all these arts experience teaches us to infer the future from the past. For no man who is skilled in any of these arts moves his limbs in any operation without connecting the memory of the past with the expectation of the future. Now of these arts a very superficial and cursory knowledge is to be acquired, not with a view to practising them (unless some duty compel us, a matter on which I do not touch at present), but with a view to forming a judgment about them, that we may not be wholly ignorant of what Scripture means to convey when it employs figures of speech derived from these arts.

48. There remain those branches of knowledge which pertain not to the bodily senses, but to the intellect, among which the science of reasoning and that of number are the chief. The science of reasoning is of very great service in searching into and unravelling all sorts of questions that come up in Scripture, only in the use of it we must guard against the love of wrangling, and the childish vanity of entrapping an adversary. For there are many of what are called sophisms, inferences in reasoning that are false, and yet so close an imitation of the true, as to deceive not only dull people, but clever men too, when they are not on their guard. For example, one man lays before another with whom he is talking, the proposition, "What I am, you are not." The other assents, for the proposition is in part true, the one man being cunning and the other simple. Then the first speaker adds: "I am a man;" and when the other has given his assent to this also, the first draws his conclusion: "Then you are not a man." Now of this sort of ensnaring arguments, Scripture, as I judge, expresses detestation in that place where it is said, "There is one that showeth wisdom in words, and is hated;" although, indeed, a style of speech which is not intended to entrap, but only aims at verbal ornamentation more than is consistent with seriousness of purpose, is also called sophistical.

49. There are also valid processes of reasoning which lead to false conclusions, by following out to its logical consequences the error of the man with whom one is arguing; and these conclusions are sometimes drawn by a good and learned man, with the object of making the person from whose error these consequences result, feel ashamed of them and of thus leading him to give up his error when he finds that if he wishes to retain his old opinion, he must of necessity also hold other opinions which he condemns. For example, the apostle did not draw true conclusions when he said, "Then is Christ not risen," and again, "Then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain;" and further on drew other inferences which are all utterly false; for Christ has risen, the preaching of those who declared this fact was not in vain, nor was their faith in vain who had believed it. But all these false inferences followed legitimately from the opinion of those who

said that there is no resurrection of the dead. These inferences, then, being repudiated as false, it follows that since they would be true if the dead rise not, there will be a resurrection of the dead. As, then, valid conclusions may be drawn not only from true but from false propositions, the laws of valid reasoning may easily be learnt in the schools, outside the pale of the Church. But the truth of propositions must be inquired into in the sacred books of the Church.

## CHAPTER 32

### VALID LOGICAL SEQUENCE IS NOT DEvised BUT ONLY OBSERVED BY MAN

50. And yet the validity of logical sequences is not a thing devised by men, but is observed and noted by them that they may be able to learn and teach it; for it exists eternally in the reason of things, and has its origin with God. For as the man who narrates the order of events does not himself create that order; and as he who describes the situations of places, or the natures of animals, or roots, or minerals, does not describe arrangements of man; and as he who points out the stars and their movements does not point out anything that he himself or any other man has ordained;—in the same way, he who says, “When the consequent is false, the antecedent must also be false,” says what is most true; but he does not himself make it so, he only points out that it is so. And it is upon this rule that the reasoning I have quoted from the Apostle Paul proceeds. For the antecedent is, “There is no resurrection of the dead,”—the position taken up by those whose error the apostle wished to overthrow. Next, from this antecedent, the assertion, viz., that there is no resurrection of the dead, the necessary consequence is, “Then Christ is not risen.” But this consequence is false, for Christ has risen; therefore the antecedent is also false. But the antecedent is, that there is no resurrection of the dead. We conclude, therefore, that there is a resurrection of the dead. Now all this is briefly expressed thus: If there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; but Christ is risen, therefore there is a resurrection of the dead. This rule, then, that when the consequent is removed, the antecedent must also be removed, is not made by man, but only pointed out by him. And this rule has reference to the validity of the reasoning, not to the truth of the statements.



## CHAPTER 33

### FALSE INFERENCES MAY BE DRAWN FROM VALID REASONINGS, AND VICE VERSA

51. In this passage, however, where the argument is about the resurrection, both the law of the inference is valid, and the conclusion arrived at is true. But in the case of false conclusions, too, there is a validity of inference in some such way as the following. Let us suppose some man to have admitted: If a snail is an animal, it has a voice. This being admitted, then, when it has been proved that the snail has no voice, it follows (since when the consequent is proved false, the antecedent is also false) that the snail is not an animal. Now this conclusion is false, but it is a true and valid inference from the false admission. Thus, the truth of a statement stands on its own merits; the validity of an inference depends on the statement or the admission of the man with whom one is arguing. And thus, as I said above, a false inference may be drawn by a valid process of reasoning, in order that he whose error we wish to correct may be sorry that he has admitted the antecedent, when he sees that its logical consequences are utterly untenable. And hence it is easy to understand that as the inferences may be valid where the opinions are false, so the inferences may be unsound where the opinions are true. For example, suppose that a man propounds the statement, "If this man is just, he is good," and we admit its truth. Then he adds, "But he is not just;" and when we admit this too, he draws the conclusion, "Therefore he is not good." Now although every one of these statements may be true, still the principle of the inference is unsound. For it is not true that, as when the consequent is proved false the antecedent is also false, so when the antecedent is proved false the consequent is false. For the statement is true, "If he is an orator, he is a man." But if we add, "He is not an orator," the consequence does not follow, "He is not a man."

## CHAPTER 34

### IT IS ONE THING TO KNOW THE LAWS OF INFERENCE, ANOTHER TO KNOW THE TRUTH OF OPINIONS

52. Therefore it is one thing to know the laws of inference, and another to know the truth of opinions. In the former case we learn what is consequent, what is inconsequent, and what is incompatible. An example of a

consequent is, “If he is an orator, he is a man;” of an inconsequent, “If he is a man, he is an orator;” of an incompatible, “If he is a man, he is a quadruped.” In these instances we judge of the connection. In regard to the truth of opinions, however, we must consider propositions as they stand by themselves, and not in their connection with one another; but when propositions that we are not sure about are joined by a valid inference to propositions that are true and certain, they themselves, too, necessarily become certain. Now some, when they have ascertained the validity of the inference, plume themselves as if this involved also the truth of the propositions. Many, again, who hold the true opinions have an unfounded contempt for themselves, because they are ignorant of the laws of inference; whereas the man who knows that there is a resurrection of the dead is assuredly better than the man who only knows that it follows that if there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.

#### CHAPTER 35

##### THE SCIENCE OF DEFINITION IS NOT FALSE, THOUGH IT MAY BE APPLIED TO FALSITIES

53. Again, the science of definition, of division, and of partition, although it is frequently applied to falsities, is not itself false, nor framed by man’s device, but is evolved from the reason of things. For although poets have applied it to their fictions, and false philosophers, or even heretics—that is, false Christians—to their erroneous doctrines, that is no reason why it should be false, for example, that neither in definition, nor in division, nor in partition, is anything to be included that does not pertain to the matter in hand, nor anything to be omitted that does. This is true, even though the things to be defined or divided are not true. For even falsehood itself is defined when we say that falsehood is the declaration of a state of things which is not as we declare it to be; and this definition is true, although falsehood itself cannot be true. We can also divide it, saying that there are two kinds of falsehood, one in regard to things that cannot be true at all, the other in regard to things that are not, though it is possible they might be, true. For example, the man who says that seven and three are eleven, says what cannot be true under any circumstances; but he who says that it rained on the kalends of January, although perhaps the fact is not so, says what

possibly might have been. The definition and division, therefore, of what is false may be perfectly true, although what is false cannot, of course, itself be true.

#### CHAPTER 36

##### THE RULES OF ELOQUENCE ARE TRUE, THOUGH SOMETIMES USED TO PERSUADE MEN OF WHAT IS FALSE

54. There are also certain rules for a more copious kind of argument, which is called eloquence, and these rules are not the less true that they can be used for persuading men of what is false; but as they can be used to enforce the truth as well, it is not the faculty itself that is to be blamed, but the perversity of those who put it to a bad use. Nor is it owing to an arrangement among men that the expression of affection conciliates the hearer, or that a narrative, when it is short and clear, is effective, and that variety arrests men's attention without wearying them. And it is the same with other directions of the same kind, which, whether the cause in which they are used be true or false, are themselves true just in so far as they are effective in producing knowledge or belief, or in moving men's minds to desire and aversion. And men rather found out that these things are so, than arranged that they should be so.

#### CHAPTER 37

##### USE OF RHETORIC AND DIALECTIC

55. This art, however, when it is learnt, is not to be used so much for ascertaining the meaning as for setting forth the meaning when it is ascertained. But the art previously spoken of, which deals with inferences, and definitions, and divisions, is of the greatest assistance in the discovery of the meaning, provided only that men do not fall into the error of supposing that when they have learnt these things they have learnt the true secret of a happy life. Still, it sometimes happens that men find less difficulty in attaining the object for the sake of which these sciences are learnt, than in going through the very intricate and thorny discipline of such rules. It is just as if a man wishing to give rules for walking should warn you not to lift the hinder foot before you set down the front one, and then

should describe minutely the way you ought to move the hinges of the joints and knees. For what he says is true, and one cannot walk in any other way; but men find it easier to walk by executing these movements than to attend to them while they are going through them, or to understand when they are told about them. Those, on the other hand, who cannot walk, care still less about such directions, as they cannot prove them by making trial of them. And in the same way a clever man often sees that an inference is unsound more quickly than he apprehends the rules for it. A dull man, on the other hand, does not see the unsoundness, but much less does he grasp the rules. And in regard to all these laws, we derive more pleasure from them as exhibitions of truth, than assistance in arguing or forming opinions, except perhaps that they put the intellect in better training. We must take care, however that they do not at the same time make it more inclined to mischief or vanity,—that is to say, that they do not give those who have learnt them an inclination to lead people astray by plausible speech and catching questions, or make them think that they have attained some great thing that gives them an advantage over the good and innocent.

#### CHAPTER 38

##### THE SCIENCE OF NUMBERS NOT CREATED, BUT ONLY DISCOVERED, BY MAN

56. Coming now to the science of number, it is clear to the dullest apprehension that this was not created by man, but was discovered by investigation. For, though Virgil could at his own pleasure make the first syllable of Italia long, while the ancients pronounced it short, it is not in any man's power to determine at his pleasure that three times three are not nine, or do not make a square, or are not the triple of three, nor one and a half times the number six, or that it is not true that they are not the double of any number because odd numbers have no half. Whether, then, numbers are considered in themselves, or as applied to the laws of figures, or of sounds, or of other motions, they have fixed laws which were not made by man, but which the acuteness of ingenious men brought to light.

57. The man, however, who puts so high a value on these things as to be inclined to boast himself one of the learned, and who does not rather inquire after the source from which those things which he perceives to be true

derive their truth, and from which those others which he perceives to be unchangeable also derive their truth and unchangeableness, and who, mounting up from bodily appearances to the mind of man, and finding that it too is changeable (for it is sometimes instructed, at other times uninstructed), although it holds a middle place between the unchangeable truth above it and the changeable things beneath it, does not strive to make all things redound to the praise and love of the one God from whom he knows that all things have their being;—the man, I say, who acts in this way may seem to be learned, but wise he cannot in any sense be deemed.

#### CHAPTER 39

TO WHICH OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED STUDIES ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN, AND IN WHAT SPIRIT

58. Accordingly, I think that it is well to warn studious and able young men, who fear God and are seeking for happiness of life, not to venture heedlessly upon the pursuit of the branches of learning that are in vogue beyond the pale of the Church of Christ, as if these could secure for them the happiness they seek; but soberly and carefully to discriminate among them. And if they find any of those which have been instituted by men varying by reason of the varying pleasure of their founders, and unknown by reason of erroneous conjectures, especially if they involve entering into fellowship with devils by means of leagues and covenants about signs, let these be utterly rejected and held in detestation. Let the young men also withdraw their attention from such institutions of men as are unnecessary and luxurious. But for the sake of the necessities of this life we must not neglect the arrangements of men that enable us to carry on intercourse with those around us. I think, however, there is nothing useful in the other branches of learning that are found among the heathen, except information about objects, either past or present, that relate to the bodily senses, in which are included also the experiments and conclusions of the useful mechanical arts, except also the sciences of reasoning and of number. And in regard to all these we must hold by the maxim, “Not too much of anything;” especially in the case of those which, pertaining as they do to the senses, are subject to the relations of space and time.

59. What, then, some men have done in regard to all words and names found in Scripture, in the Hebrew, and Syriac, and Egyptian, and other tongues, taking up and interpreting separately such as were left in Scripture without interpretation; and what Eusebius has done in regard to the history of the past with a view to the questions arising in Scripture that require a knowledge of history for their solution;—what, I say, these men have done in regard to matters of this kind, making it unnecessary for the Christian to spend his strength on many subjects for the sake of a few items of knowledge, the same, I think, might be done in regard to other matters, if any competent man were willing in a spirit of benevolence to undertake the labor for the advantage of his brethren. In this way he might arrange in their several classes, and give an account of the unknown places, and animals, and plants, and trees, and stones, and metals, and other species of things that are mentioned in Scripture, taking up these only, and committing his account to writing. This might also be done in relation to numbers, so that the theory of those numbers, and those only, which are mentioned in Holy Scripture, might be explained and written down. And it may happen that some or all of these things have been done already (as I have found that many things I had no notion of have been worked out and committed to writing by good and learned Christians), but are either lost amid the crowds of the careless, or are kept out of sight by the envious. And I am not sure whether the same thing can be done in regard to the theory of reasoning; but it seems to me it cannot, because this runs like a system of nerves through the whole structure of Scripture, and on that account is of more service to the reader in disentangling and explaining ambiguous passages, of which I shall speak hereafter, than in ascertaining the meaning of unknown signs, the topic I am now discussing.

#### CHAPTER 40

WHATEVER HAS BEEN RIGHTLY SAID BY THE HEATHEN, WE MUST APPROPRIATE TO OUR USES

60. Moreover, if those who are called philosophers, and especially the Platonists, have said aught that is true and in harmony with our faith, we are not only not to shrink from it, but to claim it for our own use from those who have unlawful possession of it. For, as the Egyptians had not only the

idols and heavy burdens which the people of Israel hated and fled from, but also vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, and garments, which the same people when going out of Egypt appropriated to themselves, designing them for a better use, not doing this on their own authority, but by the command of God, the Egyptians themselves, in their ignorance, providing them with things which they themselves were not making a good use of; in the same way all branches of heathen learning have not only false and superstitious fancies and heavy burdens of unnecessary toil, which every one of us, when going out under the leadership of Christ from the fellowship of the heathen, ought to abhor and avoid; but they contain also liberal instruction which is better adapted to the use of the truth, and some most excellent precepts of morality; and some truths in regard even to the worship of the One God are found among them. Now these are, so to speak, their gold and silver, which they did not create themselves, but dug out of the mines of God's providence which are everywhere scattered abroad, and are perversely and unlawfully prostituting to the worship of devils. These, therefore, the Christian, when he separates himself in spirit from the miserable fellowship of these men, ought to take away from them, and to devote to their proper use in preaching the gospel. Their garments, also,—that is, human institutions such as are adapted to that intercourse with men which is indispensable in this life,—we must take and turn to a Christian use.

61. And what else have many good and faithful men among our brethren done? Do we not see with what a quantity of gold and silver and garments Cyprian, that most persuasive teacher and most blessed martyr, was loaded when he came out of Egypt? How much Lactantius brought with him? And Victorinus, and Optatus, and Hilary, not to speak of living men! How much Greeks out of number have borrowed! And prior to all these, that most faithful servant of God, Moses, had done the same thing; for of him it is written that he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. And to none of all these would heathen superstition (especially in those times when, kicking against the yoke of Christ, it was persecuting the Christians) have ever furnished branches of knowledge it held useful, if it had suspected they were about to turn them to the use of worshipping the One God, and thereby overturning the vain worship of idols. But they gave their gold and their

silver and their garments to the people of God as they were going out of Egypt, not knowing how the things they gave would be turned to the service of Christ. For what was done at the time of the exodus was no doubt a type prefiguring what happens now. And this I say without prejudice to any other interpretation that may be as good, or better.

#### CHAPTER 41

##### WHAT KIND OF SPIRIT IS REQUIRED FOR THE STUDY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

62. But when the student of the Holy Scriptures, prepared in the way I have indicated, shall enter upon his investigations, let him constantly meditate upon that saying of the apostle's, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." For so he will feel that, whatever may be the riches he brings with him out of Egypt, yet unless he has kept the passover, he cannot be safe. Now Christ is our passover sacrificed for us, and there is nothing the sacrifice of Christ more clearly teaches us than the call which He himself addresses to those whom He sees toiling in Egypt under Pharaoh: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." To whom is it light but to the meek and lowly in heart, whom knowledge doth not puff up, but charity edifieth? Let them remember, then, that those who celebrated the passover at that time in type and shadow, when they were ordered to mark their door-posts with the blood of the lamb, used hyssop to mark them with. Now this is a meek and lowly herb, and yet nothing is stronger and more penetrating than its roots; that being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height,—that is, to comprehend the cross of our Lord, the breadth of which is indicated by the transverse wood on which the hands are stretched, its length by the part from the ground up to the cross-bar on which the whole body from the head downwards is fixed, its height by the part from the crossbar to the top on which the head lies, and its depth by the part which is hidden, being fixed in the earth. And by this sign of the cross all Christian action is symbolized, viz., to do good works in Christ, to cling with constancy to Him, to hope for heaven, and not to desecrate the sacraments. And purified by this Christian



action, we shall be able to know even “the love of Christ which passeth knowledge,” who is equal to the Father, by whom all things, were made, “that we may be filled with all the fullness of God.” There is besides in hyssop a purgative virtue, that the breast may not be swollen with that knowledge which puffeth up, nor boast vainly of the riches brought out from Egypt. “Purge me with hyssop,” the psalmist says, “and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness.” Then he immediately adds, to show that it is purifying from pride that is indicated by hyssop, “that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice.”

## CHAPTER 42

### SACRED SCRIPTURE COMPARED WITH PROFANE AUTHORS

63. But just as poor as the store of gold and silver and garments which the people of Israel brought with them out of Egypt was in comparison with the riches which they afterwards attained at Jerusalem, and which reached their height in the reign of King Solomon, so poor is all the useful knowledge which is gathered from the books of the heathen when compared with the knowledge of Holy Scripture. For whatever man may have learnt from other sources, if it is hurtful, it is there condemned; if it is useful, it is therein contained. And while every man may find there all that he has learnt of useful elsewhere, he will find there in much greater abundance things that are to be found nowhere else, but can be learnt only in the wonderful sublimity and wonderful simplicity of the Scriptures.

When, then, the reader is possessed of the instruction here pointed out, so that unknown signs have ceased to be a hindrance to him; when he is meek and lowly of heart, subject to the easy yoke of Christ, and loaded with His light burden, rooted and grounded and built up in faith, so that knowledge cannot puff him up, let him then approach the consideration and discussion of ambiguous signs in Scripture. And about these I shall now, in a third book, endeavor to say what the Lord shall be pleased to vouchsafe.

# Book III

Argument—The author, having discussed in the preceding book the method of dealing with unknown signs, goes on in this third book to treat of ambiguous signs. Such signs may be either direct or figurative. In the case of direct signs ambiguity may arise from the punctuation, the pronunciation, or the doubtful signification of the words, and is to be resolved by attention to the context, a comparison of translations, or a reference to the original tongue. In the case of figurative signs we need to guard against two mistakes:—1. the interpreting literal expressions figuratively; 2. the interpreting figurative expressions literally. The author lays down rules by which we may decide whether an expression is literal or figurative; the general rule being, that whatever can be shown to be in its literal sense inconsistent either with purity of life or correctness of doctrine must be taken figuratively. He then goes on to lay down rules for the interpretation of expressions which have been proved to be figurative; the general principle being, that no interpretation can be true which does not promote the love of God and the love of man. The author then proceeds to expound and illustrate the seven rules of Tichonius the Donatist, which he commends to the attention of the student of Holy Scripture.

## CHAPTER 1

### SUMMARY OF THE FOREGOING BOOKS, AND SCOPE OF THAT WHICH FOLLOWS

I. The man who fears God seeks diligently in Holy Scripture for a knowledge of His will. And when he has become meek through piety, so as to have no love of strife; when furnished also with a knowledge of languages, so as not to be stopped by unknown words and forms of speech, and with the knowledge of certain necessary objects, so as not to be ignorant of the force and nature of those which are used figuratively; and assisted, besides, by accuracy in the texts, which has been secured by skill

and care in the matter of correction;—when thus prepared, let him proceed to the examination and solution of the ambiguities of Scripture. And that he may not be led astray by ambiguous signs, so far as I can give him instruction (it may happen, however, that either from the greatness of his intellect, or the greater clearness of the light he enjoys, he shall laugh at the methods I am going to point out as childish),—but yet, as I was going to say, so far as I can give instruction, let him who is in such a state of mind that he can be instructed by me know, that the ambiguity of Scripture lies either in proper words or in metaphorical, classes which I have already described in the second book.

## CHAPTER 2

### RULE FOR REMOVING AMBIGUITY BY ATTENDING TO PUNCTUATION

2. But when proper words make Scripture ambiguous, we must see in the first place that there is nothing wrong in our punctuation or pronunciation. Accordingly, if, when attention is given to the passage, it shall appear to be uncertain in what way it ought to be punctuated or pronounced, let the reader consult the rule of faith which he has gathered from the plainer passages of Scripture, and from the authority of the Church, and of which I treated at sufficient length when I was speaking in the first book about things. But if both readings, or all of them (if there are more than two), give a meaning in harmony with the faith, it remains to consult the context, both what goes before and what comes after, to see which interpretation, out of many that offer themselves, it pronounces for and permits to be dovetailed into itself.

3. Now look at some examples. The heretical pointing, “In principio erat verbum, et verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat,” so as to make the next sentence run, “Verbum hoc erat in principio apud Deum,” arises out of unwillingness to confess that the Word was God. But this must be rejected by the rule of faith, which, in reference to the equality of the Trinity, directs us to say: “et Deus erat verbum;” and then to add: “hoc erat in principio apud Deum.”

4. But the following ambiguity of punctuation does not go against the faith in either way you take it, and therefore must be decided from the context. It is where the apostle says: “What I shall choose I wot not: for I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” Now it is uncertain whether we should read, “ex duobus concupiscentiam habens” [having a desire for two things], or “compellor autem ex duobus” [I am in a strait betwixt two]; and so to add: “concupiscentiam habens dissolvi, et esse cum Christo” [having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ]. But since there follows “multo enim magis optimum” [for it is far better], it is evident that he says he has a desire for that which is better; so that, while he is in a strait betwixt two, yet he has a desire for one and sees a necessity for the other; a desire, viz., to be with Christ, and a necessity to remain in the flesh. Now this ambiguity is resolved by one word that follows, which is translated enim [for]; and the translators who have omitted this particle have preferred the interpretation which makes the apostle seem not only in a strait betwixt two, but also to have a desire for two. We must therefore punctuate the sentence thus: “et quid eligam ignoro: compellor autem ex duobus” [what I shall choose I wot not: for I am in a strait betwixt two]; and after this point follows: “concupiscentiam habens dissolvi, et esse cum Christo” [having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ]. And, as if he were asked why he has a desire for this in preference to the other, he adds: “multo enim magis optimum” [for it is far better]. Why, then, is he in a strait betwixt the two? Because there is a need for his remaining, which he adds in these terms: “manere in carne necessarium propter vos” [nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you].

5. Where, however, the ambiguity cannot be cleared up, either by the rule of faith or by the context, there is nothing to hinder us to point the sentence according to any method we choose of those that suggest themselves. As is the case in that passage to the Corinthians: “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Receive us; we have wronged no man.” It is doubtful whether we should read, “mundemus nos ab omni coinquinatione carnis et spiritus” [let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit], in accordance with the passage, “that she

may be holy both in body and in spirit,” or, “mundemus nos ab omni coinquinatione carnis” [let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh], so as to make the next sentence, “et spiritus perficientes sanctificationem in timore Dei capite nos” [and perfecting holiness of spirit in the fear of God, receive us]. Such ambiguities of punctuation, therefore, are left to the reader’s discretion.

### CHAPTER 3

#### HOW PRONUNCIATION SERVES TO REMOVE AMBIGUITY. DIFFERENT KINDS OF INTERROGATION

6. And all the directions that I have given about ambiguous punctuations are to be observed likewise in the case of doubtful pronunciations. For these too, unless the fault lies in the carelessness of the reader, are corrected either by the rule of faith, or by a reference to the preceding or succeeding context; or if neither of these methods is applied with success, they will remain doubtful, but so that the reader will not be in fault in whatever way he may pronounce them. For example, if our faith that God will not bring any charges against His elect, and that Christ will not condemn His elect, did not stand in the way, this passage, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” might be pronounced in such a way as to make what follows an answer to this question, “God who justifieth,” and to make a second question, “Who is he that condemneth?” with the answer, “Christ Jesus who died.” But as it would be the height of madness to believe this, the passage will be pronounced in such a way as to make the first part a question of inquiry, and the second a rhetorical interrogative. Now the ancients said that the difference between an inquiry and an interrogative was this, that an inquiry admits of many answers, but to an interrogative the answer must be either “No” or “Yes.” The passage will be pronounced, then, in such a way that after the inquiry, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” what follows will be put as an interrogative: “Shall God who justifieth?”—the answer “No” being understood. And in the same way we shall have the inquiry, “Who is he that condemneth?” and the answer here again in the form of an interrogative, “Is it Christ who died? yea, rather, who is risen again? who is even at the right hand of God? who also maketh intercession for us?”—the answer “No” being understood to

every one of these questions. On the other hand, in that passage where the apostle says, “What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness;” unless after the inquiry, “What shall we say then?” what follows were given as the answer to this question: “That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness;” it would not be in harmony with the succeeding context. But with whatever tone of voice one may choose to pronounce that saying of Nathanael’s, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”—whether with that of a man who gives an affirmative answer, so that “out of Nazareth” is the only part that belongs to the interrogation, or with that of a man who asks the whole question with doubt and hesitation,—I do not see how a difference can be made. But neither sense is opposed to faith.

7. There is, again, an ambiguity arising out of the doubtful sound of syllables; and this of course has relation to pronunciation. For example, in the passage, “My bone [os meum] was not hid from Thee, which Thou didst make in secret,” it is not clear to the reader whether he should take the word os as short or long. If he make it short, it is the singular of ossa [bones]; if he make it long, it is the singular of ora [mouths]. Now difficulties such as this are cleared up by looking into the original tongue, for in the Greek we find not stoma [mouth], but hosteon [bone]. And for this reason the vulgar idiom is frequently more useful in conveying the sense than the pure speech of the educated. For I would rather have the barbarism, non est absconditum a te ossum meum, than have the passage in better Latin, but the sense less clear. But sometimes when the sound of a syllable is doubtful, it is decided by a word near it belonging to the same sentence. As, for example, that saying of the apostle, “Of the which I tell you before [praedico], as I have also told you in time past [proedixi], that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Now if he had only said, “Of the which I tell you before [quae praedico vobis],” and had not added, “as I have also told you in time past [sicut proedixi],” we could not know without going back to the original whether in the word praedico the middle syllable should be pronounced long or short. But as it is, it is clear that it should be pronounced long; for he does not say, sicut proedicavi, but sicut praedixi.

## CHAPTER 4

### HOW AMBIGUITIES MAY BE SOLVED

8. And not only these, but also those ambiguities that do not relate either to punctuation or pronunciation, are to be examined in the same way. For example, that one in the Epistle to the Thessalonians: *Propterea consolati sumus fratres in vobis*. Now it is doubtful whether *fratres* [brethren] is in the vocative or accusative case, and it is not contrary to faith to take it either way. But in the Greek language the two cases are not the same in form; and accordingly, when we look into the original, the case is shown to be vocative. Now if the translator had chosen to say, *propterea consolationem habuimus fratres in vobis*, he would have followed the words less literally, but there would have been less doubt about the meaning; or, indeed, if he had added *nostri*, hardly any one would have doubted that the vocative case was meant when he heard *propterea consolati sumus fratres nostri in vobis*. But this is a rather dangerous liberty to take. It has been taken, however, in that passage to the Corinthians, where the apostle says, “I protest by your rejoicing [per vestram gloriam] which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.” For one translator has it, *per vestram jurogloriam*, the form of adjuration appearing in the Greek without any ambiguity. It is therefore very rare and very difficult to find any ambiguity in the case of proper words, as far at least as Holy Scripture is concerned, which neither the context, showing the design of the writer, nor a comparison of translations, nor a reference to the original tongue, will suffice to explain.

## CHAPTER 5

### IT IS A WRETCHED SLAVERY WHICH TAKES THE FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF SCRIPTURE IN A LITERAL SENSE

9. But the ambiguities of metaphorical words, about which I am next to speak, demand no ordinary care and diligence. In the first place, we must beware of taking a figurative expression literally. For the saying of the apostle applies in this case too: “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” For when what is said figuratively is taken as if it were said literally, it is understood in a carnal manner. And nothing is more fittingly called the death of the soul than when that in it which raises it above the brutes, the

intelligence namely, is put in subjection to the flesh by a blind adherence to the letter. For he who follows the letter takes figurative words as if they were proper, and does not carry out what is indicated by a proper word into its secondary signification; but, if he hears of the Sabbath, for example, thinks of nothing but the one day out of seven which recurs in constant succession; and when he hears of a sacrifice, does not carry his thoughts beyond the customary offerings of victims from the flock, and of the fruits of the earth. Now it is surely a miserable slavery of the soul to take signs for things, and to be unable to lift the eye of the mind above what is corporeal and created, that it may drink in eternal light.

## CHAPTER 6

### UTILITY OF THE BONDAGE OF THE JEWS

10. This bondage, however, in the case of the Jewish people, differed widely from what it was in the case of the other nations; because, though the former were in bondage to temporal things, it was in such a way that in all these the One God was put before their minds. And although they paid attention to the signs of spiritual realities in place of the realities themselves, not knowing to what the signs referred, still they had this conviction rooted in their minds, that in subjecting themselves to such a bondage they were doing the pleasure of the one invisible God of all. And the apostle describes this bondage as being like to that of boys under the guidance of a schoolmaster. And those who clung obstinately to such signs could not endure our Lord's neglect of them when the time for their revelation had come; and hence their leaders brought it as a charge against Him that He healed on the Sabbath, and the people, clinging to these signs as if they were realities, could not believe that one who refused to observe them in the way the Jews did was God, or came from God. But those who did believe, from among whom the first Church at Jerusalem was formed, showed clearly how great an advantage it had been to be so guided by the schoolmaster that signs, which had been for a season imposed on the obedient, fixed the thoughts of those who observed them on the worship of the One God who made heaven and earth. These men, because they had been very near to spiritual things (for even in the temporal and carnal offerings and types, though they did not clearly apprehend their spiritual



meaning, they had learnt to adore the One Eternal God,) were filled with such a measure of the Holy Spirit that they sold all their goods, and laid their price at the apostles' feet to be distributed among the needy, and consecrated themselves wholly to God as a new temple, of which the old temple they were serving was but the earthly type.

11. Now it is not recorded that any of the Gentile churches did this, because men who had for their gods idols made with hands had not been so near to spiritual things.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE USELESS BONDAGE OF THE GENTILES

And if ever any of them endeavored to make it out that their idols were only signs, yet still they used them in reference to the worship and adoration of the creature. What difference does it make to me, for instance, that the image of Neptune is not itself to be considered a god, but only as representing the wide ocean, and all the other waters besides that spring out of fountains? As it is described by a poet of theirs, who says, if I recollect aright, "Thou, Father Neptune, whose hoary temples are wreathed with the resounding sea, whose beard is the mighty ocean flowing forth unceasingly, and whose hair is the winding rivers." This husk shakes its rattling stones within a sweet covering, and yet it is not food for men, but for swine. He who knows the gospel knows what I mean. What profit is it to me, then, that the image of Neptune is used with a reference to this explanation of it, unless indeed the result be that I worship neither? For any statue you like to take is as much god to me as the wide ocean. I grant, however, that they who make gods of the works of man have sunk lower than they who make gods of the works of God. But the command is that we should love and serve the One God, who is the Maker of all those things, the images of which are worshipped by the heathen either as gods, or as signs and representations of gods. If, then, to take a sign which has been established for a useful end instead of the thing itself which it was designed to signify, is bondage to the flesh, how much more so is it to take signs intended to represent useless things for the things themselves! For even if you go back to the very things signified by such signs, and engage your mind in the

worship of these, you will not be anything the more free from the burden and the livery of bondage to the flesh.

## CHAPTER 8

THE JEWS LIBERATED FROM THEIR BONDAGE IN ONE WAY, THE GENTILES IN ANOTHER

12. Accordingly the liberty that comes by Christ took those whom it found under bondage to useful signs, and who were (so to speak) near to it, and, interpreting the signs to which they were in bondage, set them free by raising them to the realities of which these were signs. And out of such were formed the churches of the saints of Israel. Those, on the other hand, whom it found in bondage to useless signs, it not only freed from their slavery to such signs, but brought to nothing and cleared out of the way all these signs themselves, so that the Gentiles were turned from the corruption of a multitude of false gods, which Scripture frequently and justly speaks of as fornication, to the worship of the One God: not that they might now fall into bondage to signs of a useful kind, but rather that they might exercise their minds in the spiritual understanding of such.

## CHAPTER 9

WHO IS IN BONDAGE TO SIGNS, AND WHO NOT

13. Now he is in bondage to a sign who uses, or pays homage to, any significant object without knowing what it signifies: he, on the other hand, who either uses or honors a useful sign divinely appointed, whose force and significance he understands, does not honor the sign which is seen and temporal, but that to which all such signs refer. Now such a man is spiritual and free even at the time of his bondage, when it is not yet expedient to reveal to carnal minds those signs by subjection to which their carnality is to be overcome. To this class of spiritual persons belonged the patriarchs and the prophets, and all those among the people of Israel through whose instrumentality the Holy Spirit ministered unto us the aids and consolations of the Scriptures. But at the present time, after that the proof of our liberty has shone forth so clearly in the resurrection of our Lord, we are not oppressed with the heavy burden of attending even to those signs which we

now understand, but our Lord Himself, and apostolic practice, have handed down to us a few rites in place of many, and these at once very easy to perform, most majestic in their significance, and most sacred in the observance; such, for example, as the sacrament of baptism, and the celebration of the body and blood of the Lord. And as soon as any one looks upon these observances he knows to what they refer, and so reveres them not in carnal bondage, but in spiritual freedom. Now, as to follow the letter, and to take signs for the things that are signified by them, is a mark of weakness and bondage; so to interpret signs wrongly is the result of being misled by error. He, however, who does not understand what a sign signifies, but yet knows that it is a sign, is not in bondage. And it is better even to be in bondage to unknown but useful signs than, by interpreting them wrongly, to draw the neck from under the yoke of bondage only to insert it in the coils of error.

## CHAPTER 10

### HOW WE ARE TO DISCERN WHETHER A PHRASE IS FIGURATIVE

14. But in addition to the foregoing rule, which guards us against taking a metaphorical form of speech as if it were literal, we must also pay heed to that which tells us not to take a literal form of speech as if it were figurative. In the first place, then, we must show the way to find out whether a phrase is literal or figurative. And the way is certainly as follows: Whatever there is in the word of God that cannot, when taken literally, be referred either to purity of life or soundness of doctrine, you may set down as figurative. Purity of life has reference to the love of God and one's neighbor; soundness of doctrine to the knowledge of God and one's neighbor. Every man, moreover, has hope in his own conscience, so far as he perceives that he has attained to the love and knowledge of God and his neighbor. Now all these matters have been spoken of in the first book.

15. But as men are prone to estimate sins, not by reference to their inherent sinfulness, but rather by reference to their own customs, it frequently happens that a man will think nothing blameable except what the men of his own country and time are accustomed to condemn, and nothing worthy of praise or approval except what is sanctioned by the custom of his

companions; and thus it comes to pass, that if Scripture either enjoins what is opposed to the customs of the hearers, or condemns what is not so opposed, and if at the same time the authority of the word has a hold upon their minds, they think that the expression is figurative. Now Scripture enjoins nothing except charity, and condemns nothing except lust, and in that way fashions the lives of men. In the same way, if an erroneous opinion has taken possession of the mind, men think that whatever Scripture asserts contrary to this must be figurative. Now Scripture asserts nothing but the catholic faith, in regard to things past, future, and present. It is a narrative of the past, a prophecy of the future, and a description of the present. But all these tend to nourish and strengthen charity, and to overcome and root out lust.

16. I mean by charity that affection of the mind which aims at the enjoyment of God for His own sake, and the enjoyment of one's self and one's neighbor in subordination to God; by lust I mean that affection of the mind which aims at enjoying one's self and one's neighbor, and other corporeal things, without reference to God. Again, what lust, when unsubdued, does towards corrupting one's own soul and body, is called vice; but what it does to injure another is called crime. And these are the two classes into which all sins may be divided. But the vices come first; for when these have exhausted the soul, and reduced it to a kind of poverty, it easily slides into crimes, in order to remove hindrances to, or to find assistance in, its vices. In the same way, what charity does with a view to one's own advantage is prudence; but what it does with a view to a neighbor's advantage is called benevolence. And here prudence comes first; because no one can confer an advantage on another which he does not himself possess. Now in proportion as the dominion of lust is pulled down, in the same proportion is that of charity built up.

## CHAPTER 11

### RULE FOR INTERPRETING PHRASES WHICH SEEM TO ASCRIBE SEVERITY TO GOD AND THE SAINTS

17. Every severity, therefore, and apparent cruelty, either in word or deed, that is ascribed in Holy Scripture to God or His saints, avails to the pulling

down of the dominion of lust. And if its meaning be clear, we are not to give it some secondary reference, as if it were spoken figuratively. Take, for example, that saying of the apostle: “But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.” But this is addressed to those who, being unwilling to subdue their lust, are themselves involved in the destruction of their lust. When, however, the dominion of lust is overturned in a man over whom it had held sway, this plain expression is used: “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.” Only that, even in these instances, some words are used figuratively, as for example, “the wrath of God” and “crucified.” But these are not so numerous, nor placed in such a way as to obscure the sense, and make it allegorical or enigmatical, which is the kind of expression properly called figurative. But in the saying addressed to Jeremiah, “See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down,” there is no doubt the whole of the language is figurative, and to be referred to the end I have spoken of.

## CHAPTER 12

### RULE FOR INTERPRETING THOSE SAYINGS AND ACTIONS WHICH ARE ASCRIBED TO GOD AND THE SAINTS, AND WHICH YET SEEM TO THE UNSKILLFUL TO BE WICKED

18. Those things, again, whether only sayings or whether actual deeds, which appear to the inexperienced to be sinful, and which are ascribed to God, or to men whose holiness is put before us as an example, are wholly figurative, and the hidden kernel of meaning they contain is to be picked out as food for the nourishment of charity. Now, whoever uses transitory objects less freely than is the custom of those among whom he lives, is either temperate or superstitious; whoever, on the other hand, uses them so as to transgress the bounds of the custom of the good men about him, either has a further meaning in what he does, or is sinful. In all such matters it is

not the use of the objects, but the lust of the user, that is to blame. Nobody in his sober senses would believe, for example, that when our Lord's feet were anointed by the woman with precious ointment, it was for the same purpose for which luxurious and profligate men are accustomed to have theirs anointed in those banquets which we abhor. For the sweet odor means the good report which is earned by a life of good works; and the man who wins this, while following in the footsteps of Christ, anoints His feet (so to speak) with the most precious ointment. And so that which in the case of other persons is often a sin, becomes, when ascribed to God or a prophet, the sign of some great truth. Keeping company with a harlot, for example, is one thing when it is the result of abandoned manners, another thing when done in the course of his prophecy by the prophet Hosea. Because it is a shamefully wicked thing to strip the body naked at a banquet among the drunken and licentious, it does not follow that it is a sin to be naked in the baths.

19. We must, therefore, consider carefully what is suitable to times and places and persons, and not rashly charge men with sins. For it is possible that a wise man may use the daintiest food without any sin of epicurism or gluttony, while a fool will crave for the vilest food with a most disgusting eagerness of appetite. And any sane man would prefer eating fish after the manner of our Lord, to eating lentiles after the manner of Esau, or barley after the manner of oxen. For there are several beasts that feed on commoner kinds of food, but it does not follow that they are more temperate than we are. For in all matters of this kind it is not the nature of the things we use, but our reason for using them, and our manner of seeking them, that make what we do either praiseworthy or blameable.

20. Now the saints of ancient times were, under the form of an earthly kingdom, foreshadowing and foretelling the kingdom of heaven. And on account of the necessity for a numerous offspring, the custom of one man having several wives was at that time blameless: and for the same reason it was not proper for one woman to have several husbands, because a woman does not in that way become more fruitful, but, on the contrary, it is base harlotry to seek either gain or offspring by promiscuous intercourse. In regard to matters of this sort, whatever the holy men of those times did

without lust, Scripture passes over without blame, although they did things which could not be done at the present time, except through lust. And everything of this nature that is there narrated we are to take not only in its historical and literal, but also in its figurative and prophetic sense, and to interpret as bearing ultimately upon the end of love towards God or our neighbor, or both. For as it was disgraceful among the ancient Romans to wear tunics reaching to the heels, and furnished with sleeves, but now it is disgraceful for men honorably born not to wear tunics of that description: so we must take heed in regard to other things also, that lust do not mix with our use of them; for lust not only abuses to wicked ends the customs of those among whom we live, but frequently also transgressing the bounds of custom, betrays, in a disgraceful outbreak, its own hideousness, which was concealed under the cover of prevailing fashions.

#### CHAPTER 13

##### SAME SUBJECT, CONTINUED

21. Whatever, then, is in accordance with the habits of those with whom we are either compelled by necessity, or undertake as a matter of duty, to spend this life, is to be turned by good and great men to some prudent or benevolent end, either directly, as is our duty, or figuratively, as is allowable to prophets.

#### CHAPTER 14

##### ERROR OF THOSE WHO THINK THAT THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE RIGHT AND WRONG

22. But when men unacquainted with other modes of life than their own meet with the record of such actions, unless they are restrained by authority, they look upon them as sins, and do not consider that their own customs either in regard to marriage, or feasts, or dress, or the other necessities and adornments of human life, appear sinful to the people of other nations and other times. And, distracted by this endless variety of customs, some who were half asleep (as I may say)—that is, who were neither sunk in the deep sleep of folly, nor were able to awake into the light of wisdom—have thought that there was no such thing as absolute right, but that every nation took its own custom for right; and that, since every nation has a different

custom, and right must remain unchangeable, it becomes manifest that there is no such thing as right at all. Such men did not perceive, to take only one example, that the precept, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,” cannot be altered by any diversity of national customs. And this precept, when it is referred to the love of God, destroys all vices when to the love of one’s neighbor, puts an end to all crimes. For no one is willing to defile his own dwelling; he ought not, therefore, to defile the dwelling of God, that is, himself. And no one wishes an injury to be done him by another; he himself, therefore, ought not to do injury to another.

## CHAPTER 15

### RULE FOR INTERPRETING FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS

23. The tyranny of lust being thus overthrown, charity reigns through its supremely just laws of love to God for His own sake, and love to one’s self and one’s neighbor for God’s sake. Accordingly, in regard to figurative expressions, a rule such as the following will be observed, to carefully turn over in our minds and meditate upon what we read till an interpretation be found that tends to establish the reign of love. Now, if when taken literally it at once gives a meaning of this kind, the expression is not to be considered figurative.

## CHAPTER 16

### RULE FOR INTERPRETING COMMANDS AND PROHIBITIONS

24. If the sentence is one of command, either forbidding a crime or vice, or enjoining an act of prudence or benevolence, it is not figurative. If, however, it seems to enjoin a crime or vice, or to forbid an act of prudence or benevolence, it is figurative. “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man,” says Christ, “and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.” This seems to enjoin a crime or a vice; it is therefore a figure, enjoining that we should have a share in the sufferings of our Lord, and that we should retain a sweet and profitable memory of the fact that His flesh was wounded and crucified for us. Scripture says: “If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink;” and this is beyond doubt a command to do a kindness. But in



what follows, “for in so doing thou shall heap coals of fire on his head,” one would think a deed of malevolence was enjoined. Do not doubt, then, that the expression is figurative; and, while it is possible to interpret it in two ways, one pointing to the doing of an injury, the other to a display of superiority, let charity on the contrary call you back to benevolence, and interpret the coals of fire as the burning groans of penitence by which a man’s pride is cured who bewails that he has been the enemy of one who came to his assistance in distress. In the same way, when our Lord says, “He who loveth his life shall lose it,” we are not to think that He forbids the prudence with which it is a man’s duty to care for his life, but that He says in a figurative sense, “Let him lose his life”—that is, let him destroy and lose that perverted and unnatural use which he now makes of his life, and through which his desires are fixed on temporal things so that he gives no heed to eternal. It is written: “Give to the godly man, and help not a sinner.” The latter clause of this sentence seems to forbid benevolence; for it says, “help not a sinner.” Understand, therefore, that “sinner” is put figuratively for sin, so that it is his sin you are not to help.

## CHAPTER 17

### SOME COMMANDS ARE GIVEN TO ALL IN COMMON, OTHERS TO PARTICULAR CLASSES

25. Again, it often happens that a man who has attained, or thinks he has attained, to a higher grade of spiritual life, thinks that the commands given to those who are still in the lower grades are figurative; for example, if he has embraced a life of celibacy and made himself a eunuch for the kingdom of heaven’s sake, he contends that the commands given in Scripture about loving and ruling a wife are not to be taken literally, but figuratively; and if he has determined to keep his virgin unmarried, he tries to put a figurative interpretation on the passage where it is said, “Marry thy daughter, and so shall thou have performed a weighty matter.” Accordingly, another of our rules for understanding the Scriptures will be as follows,—to recognize that some commands are given to all in common, others to particular classes of persons, that the medicine may act not only upon the state of health as a whole, but also upon the special weakness of each member. For that which cannot be raised to a higher state must be cared for in its own state.

## CHAPTER 18

### WE MUST TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE TIME AT WHICH ANYTHING WAS ENJOYED OR ALLOWED

26. We must also be on our guard against supposing that what in the Old Testament, making allowance for the condition of those times, is not a crime or a vice even if we take it literally and not figuratively, can be transferred to the present time as a habit of life. For no one will do this except lust has dominion over him, and endeavors to find support for itself in the very Scriptures which were intended to overthrow it. And the wretched man does not perceive that such matters are recorded with this useful design, that men of good hope may learn the salutary lesson, both that the custom they spurn can be turned to a good use, and that which they embrace can be used to condemnation, if the use of the former be accompanied with charity, and the use of the latter with lust.

27. For, if it was possible for one man to use many wives with chastity, it is possible for another to use one wife with lust. And I look with greater approval on the man who uses the fruitfulness of many wives for the sake of an ulterior object, than on the man who enjoys the body of one wife for its own sake. For in the former case the man aims at a useful object suited to the circumstances of the times; in the latter case he gratifies a lust which is engrossed in temporal enjoyments. And those men to whom the apostle permitted as a matter of indulgence to have one wife because of their incontinence, were less near to God than those who, though they had each of them numerous wives, yet just as a wise man uses food and drink only for the sake of bodily health, used marriage only for the sake of offspring. And, accordingly, if these last had been still alive at the advent of our Lord, when the time not of casting stones away but of gathering them together had come, they would have immediately made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. For there is no difficulty in abstaining unless when there is lust in enjoying. And assuredly those men of whom I speak knew that wantonness even in regard to wives is abuse and intemperance, as is proved by Tobit's prayer when he was married to his wife. For he says: "Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers, and blessed is Thy holy and glorious name for ever; let the heavens bless Thee, and all Thy creatures.

Thou madest Adam, and gavest him Eve his wife for an helper and stay. . . . And now, O Lord, Thou knowest that I take not this my sister for lust, but uprightly: therefore have pity on us, O Lord.”

## CHAPTER 19

### WICKED MEN JUDGE OTHERS BY THEMSELVES

28. But those who, giving the rein to lust, either wander about steeping themselves in a multitude of debaucheries, or even in regard to one wife not only exceed the measure necessary for the procreation of children, but with the shameless licence of a sort of slavish freedom heap up the filth of a still more beastly excess, such men do not believe it possible that the men of ancient times used a number of wives with temperance, looking to nothing but the duty, necessary in the circumstances of the time, of propagating the race; and what they themselves, who are entangled in the meshes of lust, do not accomplish in the case of a single wife, they think utterly impossible in the case of a number of wives.

29. But these same men might say that it is not right even to honor and praise good and holy men, because they themselves when they are honored and praised, swell with pride, becoming the more eager for the emptiest sort of distinction the more frequently and the more widely they are blown about on the tongue of flattery, and so become so light that a breath of rumor, whether it appear prosperous or adverse, will carry them into the whirlpool of vice or dash them on the rocks of crime. Let them, then, learn how trying and difficult it is for themselves to escape either being caught by the bait of praise, or pierced by the stings of insult; but let them not measure others by their own standard.

## CHAPTER 20

### CONSISTENCY OF GOOD MEN IN ALL OUTWARD CIRCUMSTANCES

Let them believe, on the contrary, that the apostles of our faith were neither puffed up when they were honored by men, nor cast down when they were despised. And certainly neither sort of temptation was wanting to those great men. For they were both cried up by the loud praises of believers, and

cried down by the slanderous reports of their persecutors. But the apostles used all these things, as occasion served, and were not corrupted; and in the same way the saints of old used their wives with reference to the necessities of their own times, and were not in bondage to lust as they are who refuse to believe these things.

30. For if they had been under the influence of any such passion, they could never have restrained themselves from implacable hatred towards their sons, by whom they knew that their wives and concubines were solicited and debauched.

## CHAPTER 21

### DAVID NOT LUSTFUL, THOUGH HE FELL INTO ADULTERY

But when King David had suffered this injury at the hands of his impious and unnatural son, he not only bore with him in his mad passion, but mourned over him in his death. He certainly was not caught in the meshes of carnal jealousy, seeing that it was not his own injuries but the sins of his son that moved him. For it was on this account he had given orders that his son should not be slain if he were conquered in battle, that he might have a place of repentance after he was subdued; and when he was baffled in this design, he mourned over his son's death, not because of his own loss, but because he knew to what punishment so impious an adulterer and parricide had been hurried. For prior to this, in the case of another son who had been guilty of no crime, though he was dreadfully afflicted for him while he was sick, yet he comforted himself after his death.

31. And with what moderation and self-restraint those men used their wives appears chiefly in this, that when this same king, carried away by the heat of passion and by temporal prosperity, had taken unlawful possession of one woman, whose husband also he ordered to be put to death, he was accused of his crime by a prophet, who, when he had come to show him his sin, set before him the parable of the poor man who had but one ewe-lamb, and whose neighbor, though he had many, yet when a guest came to him spared to take of his own flock, but set his poor neighbor's one lamb before his guest to eat. And David's anger being kindled against the man, he

commanded that he should be put to death, and the lamb restored fourfold to the poor man; thus unwittingly condemning the sin he had wittingly committed. And when he had been shown this, and God's punishment had been denounced against him, he wiped out his sin in deep penitence. But yet in this parable it was the adultery only that was indicated by the poor man's ewe-lamb; about the killing of the woman's husband,—that is, about the murder of the poor man himself who had the one ewe-lamb,—nothing is said in the parable, so that the sentence of condemnation is pronounced against the adultery alone. And hence we may understand with what temperance he possessed a number of wives when he was forced to punish himself for transgressing in regard to one woman. But in his case the immoderate desire did not take up its abode with him, but was only a passing guest. On this account the unlawful appetite is called even by the accusing prophet, a guest. For he did not say that he took the poor man's ewe-lamb to make a feast for his king, but for his guest. In the case of his son Solomon, however, this lust did not come and pass away like a guest, but reigned as a king. And about him Scripture is not silent, but accuses him of being a lover of strange women; for in the beginning of his reign he was inflamed with a desire for wisdom, but after he had attained it through spiritual love, he lost it through carnal lust.

## CHAPTER 22

### RULE REGARDING PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE IN WHICH APPROVAL IS EXPRESSED OF ACTIONS WHICH ARE NOW CONDEMNED BY GOOD MEN

32. Therefore, although all, or nearly all, the transactions recorded in the Old Testament are to be taken not literally only, but figuratively as well, nevertheless even in the case of those which the reader has taken literally, and which, though the authors of them are praised, are repugnant to the habits of the good men who since our Lord's advent are the custodians of the divine commands, let him refer the figure to its interpretation, but let him not transfer the act to his habits of life. For many things which were done as duties at that time, cannot now be done except through lust.

## CHAPTER 23

### RULE REGARDING THE NARRATIVE OF SINS OF GREAT MEN

33. And when he reads of the sins of great men, although he may be able to see and to trace out in them a figure of things to come, let him yet put the literal fact to this use also, to teach him not to dare to vaunt himself in his own good deeds, and in comparison with his own righteousness, to despise others as sinners, when he sees in the case of men so eminent both the storms that are to be avoided and the shipwrecks that are to be wept over. For the sins of these men were recorded to this end, that men might everywhere and always tremble at that saying of the apostle: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." For there is hardly a page of Scripture on which it is not clearly written that God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.

## CHAPTER 24

### THE CHARACTER OF THE EXPRESSIONS USED IS ABOVE ALL TO HAVE WEIGHT

34. The chief thing to be inquired into, therefore, in regard to any expression that we are trying to understand is, whether it is literal or figurative. For when it is ascertained to be figurative, it is easy, by an application of the laws of things which we discussed in the first book, to turn it in every way until we arrive at a true interpretation, especially when we bring to our aid experience strengthened by the exercise of piety. Now we find out whether an expression is literal or figurative by attending to the considerations indicated above.

## CHAPTER 25

### THE SAME WORD DOES NOT ALWAYS SIGNIFY THE SAME THING

And when it is shown to be figurative, the words in which it is expressed will be found to be drawn either from like objects or from objects having some affinity.

35. But as there are many ways in which things show a likeness to each other, we are not to suppose there is any rule that what a thing signifies by

similitude in one place it is to be taken to signify in all other places. For our Lord used leaven both in a bad sense, as when He said, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees,” and in a good sense, as when He said, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”

36. Now the rule in regard to this variation has two forms. For things that signify now one thing and now another, signify either things that are contrary, or things that are only different. They signify contraries, for example, when they are used metaphorically at one time in a good sense, at another in a bad, as in the case of the leaven mentioned above. Another example of the same is that a lion stands for Christ in the place where it is said, “The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed;” and again, stands for the devil where it is written, “Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.” In the same way the serpent is used in a good sense, “Be wise as serpents;” and again, in a bad sense, “The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty.” Bread is used in a good sense, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven;” in a bad, “Bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” And so in a great many other cases. The examples I have adduced are indeed by no means doubtful in their signification, because only plain instances ought to be used as examples. There are passages, however, in regard to which it is uncertain in what sense they ought to be taken, as for example, “In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red: it is full of mixture.” Now it is uncertain whether this denotes the wrath of God, but not to the last extremity of punishment, that is, “to the very dregs;” or whether it denotes the grace of the Scriptures passing away from the Jews and coming to the Gentiles, because “He has put down one and set up another,”—certain observances, however, which they understand in a carnal manner, still remaining among the Jews, for “the dregs hereof is not yet wrung out.” The following is an example of the same object being taken, not in opposite, but only in different significations: water denotes people, as we read in the Apocalypse, and also the Holy Spirit, as for example, “Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;” and many other things besides water must be interpreted according to the place in which they are found.

37. And in the same way other objects are not single in their signification, but each one of them denotes not two only but sometimes even several different things, according to the connection in which it is found.

#### CHAPTER 26

##### OBSCURE PASSAGES ARE TO BE INTERPRETED BY THOSE WHICH ARE CLEARER

Now from the places where the sense in which they are used is more manifest we must gather the sense in which they are to be understood in obscure passages. For example, there is no better way of understanding the words addressed to God, "Take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for mine help," than by referring to the passage where we read, "Thou, Lord, hast crowned us with Thy favor as with a shield." And yet we are not so to understand it, as that wherever we meet with a shield put to indicate a protection of any kind, we must take it as signifying nothing but the favor of God. For we hear also of the shield of faith, "wherewith," says the apostle, "ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Nor ought we, on the other hand, in regard to spiritual armor of this kind to assign faith to the shield only; for we read in another place of the breastplate of faith: "putting on," says the apostle, "the breastplate of faith and love."

#### CHAPTER 27

##### ONE PASSAGE SUSCEPTIBLE OF VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

38. When, again, not some one interpretation, but two or more interpretations are put upon the same words of Scripture, even though the meaning the writer intended remain undiscovered, there is no danger if it can be shown from other passages of Scripture that any of the interpretations put on the words is in harmony with the truth. And if a man in searching the Scriptures endeavors to get at the intention of the author through whom the Holy Spirit spoke, whether he succeeds in this endeavor, or whether he draws a different meaning from the words, but one that is not opposed to sound doctrine, he is free from blame so long as he is supported by the testimony of some other passage of Scripture. For the author perhaps saw that this very meaning lay in the words which we are trying to



interpret; and assuredly the Holy Spirit, who through him spoke these words, foresaw that this interpretation would occur to the reader, nay, made provision that it should occur to him, seeing that it too is founded on truth. For what more liberal and more fruitful provision could God have made in regard to the Sacred Scriptures than that the same words might be understood in several senses, all of which are sanctioned by the concurring testimony of other passages equally divine?

## CHAPTER 28

### IT IS SAFER TO EXPLAIN A DOUBTFUL PASSAGE BY OTHER PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE THAN BY REASON

39. When, however, a meaning is evolved of such a kind that what is doubtful in it cannot be cleared up by indubitable evidence from Scripture, it remains for us to make it clear by the evidence of reason. But this is a dangerous practice. For it is far safer to walk by the light of Holy Scripture; so that when we wish to examine the passages that are obscured by metaphorical expressions, we may either obtain a meaning about which there is no controversy, or if a controversy arises, may settle it by the application of testimonies sought out in every portion of the same Scripture.

## CHAPTER 29

### THE KNOWLEDGE OF TROPES IS NECESSARY

40. Moreover, I would have learned men to know that the authors of our Scriptures use all those forms of expression which grammarians call by the Greek name tropes, and use them more freely and in greater variety than people who are unacquainted with the Scriptures, and have learnt these figures of speech from other writings, can imagine or believe. Nevertheless those who know these tropes recognize them in Scripture, and are very much assisted by their knowledge of them in understanding Scripture. But this is not the place to teach them to the illiterate, lest it might seem that I was teaching grammar. I certainly advise, however, that they be learnt elsewhere, although indeed I have already given that advice above, in the second book—namely, where I treated of the necessary knowledge of languages. For the written characters from which grammar itself gets its

name (the Greek name for letters being grammata are the signs of sounds made by the articulate voice with which we speak. Now of some of these figures of speech we find in Scripture not only examples (which we have of them all), but the very names as well: for instance, allegory, enigma, and parable. However, nearly all these tropes which are said to be learnt as a matter of liberal education are found even in the ordinary speech of men who have learnt no grammar, but are content to use the vulgar idiom. For who does not say, "So may you flourish?" And this is the figure of speech called metaphor. Who does not speak of a fish-pond in which there is no fish, which was not made for fish, and yet gets its name from fish? And this is the figure called catachresis.

41. It would be tedious to go over all the rest in this way; for the speech of the vulgar makes use of them all, even of those more curious figures which mean the very opposite of what they say, as for example, those called irony and antiphrasis. Now in irony we indicate by the tone of voice the meaning we desire to convey; as when we say to a man who is behaving badly, "You are doing well." But it is not by the tone of voice that we make an antiphrasis to indicate the opposite of what the words convey; but either the words in which it is expressed are used in the opposite of their etymological sense, as a grove is called *lucus* from its want of light; or it is customary to use a certain form of expression, although it puts yes for no by a law of contraries, as when we ask in a place for what is not there, and get the answer, "There is plenty;" or we add words that make it plain we mean the opposite of what we say, as in the expression, "Beware of him, for he is a good man." And what illiterate man is there that does not use such expressions, although he knows nothing at all about either the nature or the names of these figures of speech? And yet the knowledge of these is necessary for clearing up the difficulties of Scripture; because when the words taken literally give an absurd meaning, we ought forthwith to inquire whether they may not be used in this or that figurative sense which we are unacquainted with; and in this way many obscure passages have had light thrown upon them.

42. One Tichonius, who, although a Donatist himself, has written most triumphantly against the Donatists (and herein showed himself of a most inconsistent disposition, that he was unwilling to give them up altogether), wrote a book which he called the Book of Rules, because in it he laid down seven rules, which are, as it were, keys to open the secrets of Scripture. And of these rules, the first relates to the Lord and His body, the second to the twofold division of the Lord's body, the third to the promises and the law, the fourth to species and genus, the fifth to times, the sixth to recapitulation, the seventh to the devil and his body. Now these rules, as expounded by their author, do indeed, when carefully considered, afford considerable assistance in penetrating the secrets of the sacred writings; but still they do not explain all the difficult passages, for there are several other methods required, which are so far from being embraced in this number of seven, that the author himself explains many obscure passages without using any of his rules; finding, indeed, that there was no need for them, as there was no difficulty in the passage of the kind to which his rules apply. As, for example, he inquires what we are to understand in the Apocalypse by the seven angels of the churches to whom John is commanded to write; and after much and various reasoning, arrives at the conclusion that the angels are the churches themselves. And throughout this long and full discussion, although the matter inquired into is certainly very obscure, no use whatever is made of the rules. This is enough for an example, for it would be too tedious and troublesome to collect all the passages in the canonical Scriptures which present obscurities of such a kind as require none of these seven rules for their elucidation.

43. The author himself, however, when commending these rules, attributes so much value to them that it would appear as if, when they were thoroughly known and duly applied, we should be able to interpret all the obscure passages in the law—that is, in the sacred books. For he thus commences this very book: “Of all the things that occur to me, I consider none so necessary as to write a little book of rules, and, as it were, to make keys for, and put windows in, the secret places of the law. For there are certain mystical rules which hold the key to the secret recesses of the whole law, and render visible the treasures of truth that are to many invisible. And if this system of rules be received as I communicate it, without jealousy,

what is shut shall be laid open, and what is obscure shall be elucidated, so that a man travelling through the vast forest of prophecy shall, if he follow these rules as pathways of light, be preserved from going astray.” Now, if he had said, “There are certain mystical rules which hold the key to some of the secrets of the law,” or even “which hold the key to the great secrets of the law,” and not what he does say, “the secret recesses of the whole law;” and if he had not said “What is shut shall be laid open,” but, “Many things that are shut shall be laid open,” he would have said what was true, and he would not, by attributing more than is warranted by the facts to his very elaborate and useful work, have led the reader into false expectations. And I have thought it right to say thus much, in order both that the book may be read by the studious (for it is of very great assistance in understanding Scripture), and that no more may be expected from it than it really contains. Certainly it must be read with caution, not only on account of the errors into which the author falls as a man, but chiefly on account of the heresies which he advances as a Donatist. And now I shall briefly indicate what these seven rules teach or advise.

## CHAPTER 31

### THE FIRST RULE OF TICHONIUS

44. The first is about the Lord and His body, and it is this, that, knowing as we do that the head and the body—that is, Christ and His Church—are sometimes indicated to us under one person (for it is not in vain that it is said to believers, “Ye then are Abraham’s seed,” when there is but one seed of Abraham, and that is Christ), we need not be in a difficulty when a transition is made from the head to the body or from the body to the head, and yet no change made in the person spoken of. For a single person is represented as saying, “He hath decked me as a bridegroom with ornaments, and adorned me as a bride with jewels” and yet it is, of course, a matter for interpretation which of these two refers to the head and which to the body, that is, which to Christ and which to the Church.

## CHAPTER 32

### THE SECOND RULE OF TICHONIUS

45. The second rule is about the twofold division of the body of the Lord; but this indeed is not a suitable name, for that is really no part of the body of Christ which will not be with Him in eternity. We ought, therefore, to say that the rule is about the true and the mixed body of the Lord, or the true and the counterfeit, or some such name; because, not to speak of eternity, hypocrites cannot even now be said to be in Him, although they seem to be in His Church. And hence this rule might be designated thus: Concerning the mixed Church. Now this rule requires the reader to be on his guard when Scripture, although it has now come to address or speak of a different set of persons, seems to be addressing or speaking of the same persons as before, just as if both sets constituted one body in consequence of their being for the time united in a common participation of the sacraments. An example of this is that passage in the Song of Solomon, "I am black, but comely, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." For it is not said, I was black as the tents of Kedar, but am now comely as the curtains of Solomon. The Church declares itself to be at present both; and this because the good fish and the bad are for the time mixed up in the one net. For the tents of Kedar pertain to Ishmael, who "shall not be heir with the son of the free woman." And in the same way, when God says of the good part of the Church, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them;" He immediately adds in regard to the other part, the bad that is mixed with the good, "They shall be turned back." Now these words refer to a set of persons altogether different from the former; but as the two sets are for the present united in one body, He speaks as if there were no change in the subject of the sentence. They will not, however, always be in one body; for one of them is that wicked servant of whom we are told in the gospel, whose lord, when he comes, "shall cut him asunder and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites."

## CHAPTER 33

### THE THIRD RULE OF TICHONIUS

46. The third rule relates to the promises and the law, and may be designated in other terms as relating to the spirit and the letter, which is the

name I made use of when writing a book on this subject. It may be also named, of grace and the law. This, however, seems to me to be a great question in itself, rather than a rule to be applied to the solution of other questions. It was the want of clear views on this question that originated, or at least greatly aggravated, the Pelagian heresy. And the efforts of Tichonius to clear up this point were good, but not complete. For, in discussing the question about faith and works, he said that works were given us by God as the reward of faith, but that faith itself was so far our own that it did not come to us from God; not keeping in mind the saying of the apostle: "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." But he had not come into contact with this heresy, which has arisen in our time, and has given us much labor and trouble in defending against it the grace of God which is through our Lord Jesus Christ, and which (according to the saying of the apostle, "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" ) has made us much more watchful and diligent to discover in Scripture what escaped Tichonius, who, having no enemy to guard against, was less attentive and anxious on this point, namely, that even faith itself is the gift of Him who "hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." Whence it is said to certain believers: "Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Who, then, can doubt that each of these is the gift of God, when he learns from this passage, and believes, that each of them is given? There are many other testimonies besides which prove this. But I am not now treating of this doctrine. I have, however, dealt with it, one place or another, very frequently.

## CHAPTER 34

### THE FOURTH RULE OF TICHONIUS

47. The fourth rule of Tichonius is about species and genus. For so he calls it, intending that by species should be understood a part, by genus the whole of which that which he calls species is a part: as, for example, every single city is a part of the great society of nations: the city he calls a species, all nations constitute the genus. There is no necessity for here applying that subtilty of distinction which is in use among logicians, who discuss with

great acuteness the difference between a part and a species. The rule is of course the same, if anything of the kind referred to is found in Scripture, not in regard to a single city, but in regard to a single province, or tribe, or kingdom. Not only, for example, about Jerusalem, or some of the cities of the Gentiles, such as Tyre or Babylon, are things said in Scripture whose significance oversteps the limits of the city, and which are more suitable when applied to all nations; but in regard to Judea also, and Egypt, and Assyria, or any other nation you choose to take which contains numerous cities, but still is not the whole world, but only a part of it, things are said which pass over the limits of that particular country, and apply more fitly to the whole of which this is a part; or, as our author terms it, to the genus of which this is a species. And hence these words have come to be commonly known, so that even uneducated people understand what is laid down specially, and what generally, in any given Imperial command. The same thing occurs in the case of men: things are said of Solomon, for example, the scope of which reaches far beyond him, and which are only properly understood when applied to Christ and His Church, of which Solomon is a part.

48. Now the species is not always overstepped, for things are often said of such a kind as evidently apply to it also, or perhaps even to it exclusively. But when Scripture, having up to a certain point been speaking about the species, makes a transition at that point from the species to the genus, the reader must then be carefully on his guard against seeking in the species what he can find much better and more surely in the genus. Take, for example, what the prophet Ezekiel says: "When the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way, and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: and I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way, and according to their doings, I judged them." Now it is easy to understand that this applies to that house of Israel of which the apostle says, "Behold Israel after the flesh;" because the people of Israel after the flesh did both perform and endure all that is here referred to. What immediately follows, too, may be understood as applying to the same

people. But when the prophet begins to say, "And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord," the reader ought now carefully to observe the way in which the species is overstepped and the genus taken in. For he goes on to say: "And I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my commandments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." Now that this is a prophecy of the New Testament, to which pertain not only the remnant of that one nation of which it is elsewhere said, "For though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall be saved," but also the other nations which were promised to their fathers and our fathers; and that there is here a promise of that washing of regeneration which, as we see, is now imparted to all nations, no one who looks into the matter can doubt. And that saying of the apostle, when he is commending the grace of the New Testament and its excellence in comparison with the Old, "Ye are our epistle . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart," has an evident reference to this place where the prophet says, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Now the heart of flesh from which the apostle's expression, "the fleshy tables of the heart," is drawn, the prophet intended to point out as distinguished from the stony heart by the possession of sentient life; and by sentient he understood intelligent life. And thus the spiritual Israel is made up, not of one nation, but of all the nations which were promised to the fathers in their seed, that is, in Christ.



49. This spiritual Israel, therefore, is distinguished from the carnal Israel which is of one nation, by newness of grace, not by nobility of descent, in feeling, not in race; but the prophet, in his depth of meaning, while speaking of the carnal Israel, passes on, without indicating the transition, to speak of the spiritual, and although now speaking of the latter, seems to be still speaking of the former; not that he grudges us the clear apprehension of Scripture, as if we were enemies, but that he deals with us as a physician, giving us a wholesome exercise for our spirit. And therefore we ought to take this saying, “And I will bring you into your own land,” and what he says shortly afterwards, as if repeating himself, “And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers,” not literally, as if they referred to Israel after the flesh, but spiritually, as referring to the spiritual Israel. For the Church, without spot or wrinkle, gathered out of all nations, and destined to reign for ever with Christ, is itself the land of the blessed, the land of the living; and we are to understand that this was given to the fathers when it was promised to them for what the fathers believed would be given in its own time was to them, on account of the unchangeableness of the promise and purpose, the same as if it were already given; just as the apostle, writing to Timothy, speaks of the grace which is given to the saints: “Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour.” He speaks of the grace as given at a time when those to whom it was to be given were not yet in existence; because he looks upon that as having been already done in the arrangement and purpose of God, which was to take place in its own time, and he himself speaks of it as now made manifest. It is possible, however, that these words may refer to the land of the age to come, when there will be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein the unrighteous shall be unable to dwell. And so it is truly said to the righteous, that the land itself is theirs, no part of which will belong to the unrighteous; because it is the same as if it were itself given, when it is firmly settled that it shall be given.

## CHAPTER 35

### THE FIFTH RULE OF TICHONIUS

50. The fifth rule Tichonius lays down is one he designates of times,—a rule by which we can frequently discover or conjecture quantities of time which are not expressly mentioned in Scripture. And he says that this rule applies in two ways: either to the figure of speech called synecdoche, or to legitimate numbers. The figure synecdoche either puts the part for the whole, or the whole for the part. As, for example, in reference to the time when, in the presence of only three of His disciples, our Lord was transfigured on the mount, so that His face shone as the sun, and His raiment was white as snow, one evangelist says that this event occurred “after eight days,” while another says that it occurred “after six days.” Now both of these statements about the number of days cannot be true, unless we suppose that the writer who says “after eight days,” counted the latter part of the day on which Christ uttered the prediction and the first part of the day on which he showed its fulfillment as two whole days; while the writer who says “after six days,” counted only the whole unbroken days between these two. This figure of speech, which puts the part for the whole, explains also the great question about the resurrection of Christ. For unless to the latter part of the day on which He suffered we join the previous night, and count it as a whole day, and to the latter part of the night in which He arose we join the Lord’s day which was just dawning, and count it also a whole day, we cannot make out the three days and three nights during which He foretold that He would be in the heart of the earth.

51. In the next place, our author calls those numbers legitimate which Holy Scripture more highly favors such as seven, or ten, or twelve, or any of the other numbers which the diligent reader of Scripture soon comes to know. Now numbers of this sort are often put for time universal; as for example, “Seven times in the day do I praise Thee,” means just the same as “His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” And their force is exactly the same, either when multiplied by ten, as seventy and seven hundred (whence the seventy years mentioned in Jeremiah may be taken in a spiritual sense for the whole time during which the Church is a sojourner among aliens); or when multiplied into themselves, as ten into ten gives one hundred, and twelve into twelve gives one hundred and forty-four, which last number is used in the Apocalypse to signify the whole body of the saints. Hence it appears that it is not merely questions about times that are to be settled by

these numbers, but that their significance is of much wider application, and extends to many subjects. That number in the Apocalypse, for example, mentioned above, has not reference to times, but to men.

## CHAPTER 36

### THE SIXTH RULE OF TICHONIUS

52. The sixth rule Tichonius calls the recapitulation, which, with sufficient watchfulness, is discovered in difficult parts of Scripture. For certain occurrences are so related, that the narrative appears to be following the order of time, or the continuity of events, when it really goes back without mentioning it to previous occurrences, which had been passed over in their proper place. And we make mistakes if we do not understand this, from applying the rule here spoken of. For example, in the book of Genesis we read, “And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” Now here it seems to be indicated that the events last mentioned took place after God had formed man and put him in the garden; whereas the fact is, that the two events having been briefly mentioned, viz., that God planted a garden, and there put the man whom He had formed, the narrative goes back, by way of recapitulation, to tell what had before been omitted, the way in which the garden was planted: that out of the ground God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food. Here there follows, “The tree of life also was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” Next the river is mentioned which watered the garden, and which was parted into four heads, the sources of four streams; and all this has reference to the arrangements of the garden. And when this is finished, there is a repetition of the fact which had been already told, but which in the strict order of events came after all this: “And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden.” For it was after all these other things were done that man was put in the garden, as now appears from the order of the narrative itself: it was not after man was put there that the other things were done, as the previous statement might be thought to imply, did we not accurately mark and understand the

recapitulation by which the narrative reverts to what had previously been passed over.

53. In the same book, again, when the generations of the sons of Noah are recounted, it is said: "These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations." And, again, when the sons of Shem are enumerated: "These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations." And it is added in reference to them all: "These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations; and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood. And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech." Now the addition of this sentence, "And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech," seems to indicate that at the time when the nations were scattered over the earth they had all one language in common; but this is evidently inconsistent with the previous words, "in their families, after their tongues." For each family or nation could not be said to have its own language if all had one language in common. And so it is by way of recapitulation it is added, "And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech," the narrative here going back, without indicating the change, to tell how it was, that from having one language in common, the nations were divided into a multitude of tongues. And, accordingly, we are forthwith told of the building of the tower, and of this punishment being there laid upon them as the judgment of God upon their arrogance; and it was after this that they were scattered over the earth according to their tongues.

54. This recapitulation is found in a still more obscure form; as, for example, our Lord says in the gospel: "The same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife." Is it when our Lord shall have been revealed that men are to give heed to these sayings, and not to look behind them, that is, not to long after the past life which they have renounced? Is not the present rather the time to give heed to them, that when the Lord shall have been

revealed every man may receive his reward according to the things he has given heed to or despised? And yet because Scripture says, “In that day,” the time of the revelation of the Lord will be thought the time for giving heed to these sayings, unless the reader be watchful and intelligent so as to understand the recapitulation, in which he will be assisted by that other passage of Scripture which even in the time of the apostles proclaimed: “Little children, it is the last time.” The very time then when the gospel is preached, up to the time that the Lord shall be revealed, is the day in which men ought to give heed to these sayings: for to the same day, which shall be brought to a close by a day of judgment, belongs that very revelation of the Lord here spoken of.

## CHAPTER 37

### THE SEVENTH RULE OF TICHONIUS

55. The seventh rule of Tichonius and the last, is about the devil and his body. For he is the head of the wicked, who are in a sense his body, and destined to go with him into the punishment of everlasting fire, just as Christ is the head of the Church, which is His body, destined to be with Him in His eternal kingdom and glory. Accordingly, as the first rule, which is called of the Lord and His body, directs us, when Scripture speaks of one and the same person, to take pains to understand which part of the statement applies to the head and which to the body; so this last rule shows us that statements are sometimes made about the devil, whose truth is not so evident in regard to himself as in regard to his body; and his body is made up not only of those who are manifestly out of the way, but of those also who, though they really belong to him, are for a time mixed up with the Church, until they depart from this life, or until the chaff is separated from the wheat at the last great winnowing. For example, what is said in Isaiah, “How he is fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the morning!” and the other statements of the context which, under the figure of the king of Babylon, are made about the same person, are of course to be understood of the devil; and yet the statement which is made in the same place, “He is ground down on the earth, who sendeth to all nations,” does not altogether fitly apply to the head himself. For, although the devil sends his angels to all nations, yet it is his body, not himself, that is ground down on the each, except that he

himself is in his body, which is beaten small like the dust which the wind blows from the face of the earth.

56. Now all these rules, except the one about the promises and the law, make one meaning to be understood where another is expressed, which is the peculiarity of figurative diction; and this kind of diction, it seems to me, is too widely spread to be comprehended in its full extent by any one. For, wherever one thing is said with the intention that another should be understood we have a figurative expression, even though the name of the trope is not to be found in the art of rhetoric. And when an expression of this sort occurs where it is customary to find it, there is no trouble in understanding it; when it occurs, however, where it is not customary, it costs labor to understand it, from some more, from some less, just as men have got more or less from God of the gifts of intellect, or as they have access to more or fewer external helps. And, as in the case of proper words which I discussed above, and in which things are to be understood just as they are expressed, so in the case of figurative words, in which one thing is expressed and another is to be understood, and which I have just finished speaking of as much as I thought enough, students of these venerable documents ought to be counselled not only to make themselves acquainted with the forms of expression ordinarily used in Scripture, to observe them carefully, and to remember them accurately, but also, what is especially and before all things necessary, to pray that they may understand them. For in these very books on the study of which they are intent, they read, “The Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding;” and it is from Him they have received their very desire for knowledge, if it is wedded to piety. But about signs, so far as relates to words, I have now said enough. It remains to discuss, in the following book, so far as God has given me light, the means of communicating our thoughts to others.

# Book IV

Argument—Passing to the second part of his work, that which treats of expression, the author premises that it is no part of his intention to write a treatise on the laws of rhetoric. These can be learned elsewhere, and ought not to be neglected, being indeed specially necessary for the Christian teacher, whom it behoves to excel in eloquence and power of speech. After detailing with much care and minuteness the various qualities of an orator, he recommends the authors of the Holy Scriptures as the best models of eloquence, far excelling all others in the combination of eloquence with wisdom. He points out that perspicuity is the most essential quality of style, and ought to be cultivated with especial care by the teacher, as it is the main requisite for instruction, although other qualities are required for delighting and persuading the hearer. All these gifts are to be sought in earnest prayer from God, though we are not to forget to be zealous and diligent in study. He shows that there are three species of style, the subdued, the elegant, and the majestic; the first serving for instruction, the second for praise, and the third for exhortation: and of each of these he gives examples, selected both from scripture and from early teachers of the church, Cyprian and Ambrose. He shows that these various styles may be mingled, and when and for what purposes they are mingled; and that they all have the same end in view, to bring home the truth to the hearer, so that he may understand it, hear it with gladness, and practise it in his life. Finally, he exhorts the Christian teacher himself, pointing out the dignity and responsibility of the office he holds to lead a life in harmony with his own teaching, and to show a good example to all.

## CHAPTER 1

THIS WORK NOT INTENDED AS A TREATISE ON RHETORIC

1. This work of mine, which is entitled On Christian Doctrine, was at the commencement divided into two parts. For, after a preface, in which I answered by anticipation those who were likely to take exception to the work, I said, “There are two things on which all interpretation of Scripture depends: the mode of ascertaining the proper meaning, and the mode of making known the meaning when it is ascertained. I shall treat first of the mode of ascertaining, next of the mode of making known, the meaning.” As, then, I have already said a great deal about the mode of ascertaining the meaning, and have given three books to this one part of the subject, I shall only say a few things about the mode of making known the meaning, in order if possible to bring them all within the compass of one book, and so finish the whole work in four books.

2. In the first place, then, I wish by this preamble to put a stop to the expectations of readers who may think that I am about to lay down rules of rhetoric such as I have learnt, and taught too, in the secular schools, and to warn them that they need not look for any such from me. Not that I think such rules of no use, but that whatever use they have is to be learnt elsewhere; and if any good man should happen to have leisure for learning them, he is not to ask me to teach them either in this work or any other.

## CHAPTER 2

### IT IS LAWFUL FOR A CHRISTIAN TEACHER TO USE THE ART OF RHETORIC

3. Now, the art of rhetoric being available for the enforcing either of truth or falsehood, who will dare to say that truth in the person of its defenders is to take its stand unarmed against falsehood? For example, that those who are trying to persuade men of what is false are to know how to introduce their subject, so as to put the hearer into a friendly, or attentive, or teachable frame of mind, while the defenders of the truth shall be ignorant of that art? That the former are to tell their falsehoods briefly, clearly, and plausibly, while the latter shall tell the truth in such a way that it is tedious to listen to, hard to understand, and, in fine, not easy to believe it? That the former are to oppose the truth and defend falsehood with sophistical arguments, while the latter shall be unable either to defend what is true, or to refute what is false? That the former, while imbuing the minds of their hearers with



erroneous opinions, are by their power of speech to awe, to melt, to enliven, and to rouse them, while the latter shall in defence of the truth be sluggish, and frigid, and somnolent? Who is such a fool as to think this wisdom? Since, then, the faculty of eloquence is available for both sides, and is of very great service in the enforcing either of wrong or right, why do not good men study to engage it on the side of truth, when bad men use it to obtain the triumph of wicked and worthless causes, and to further injustice and error?

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE PROPER AGE AND THE PROPER MEANS FOR ACQUIRING RHETORICAL SKILL

4. But the theories and rules on this subject (to which, when you add a tongue thoroughly skilled by exercise and habit in the use of many words and many ornaments of speech, you have what is called eloquence or oratory) may be learnt apart from these writings of mine, if a suitable space of time be set aside for the purpose at a fit and proper age. But only by those who can learn them quickly; for the masters of Roman eloquence themselves did not shrink from saying that any one who cannot learn this art quickly can never thoroughly learn it at all. Whether this be true or not, why need we inquire? For even if this art can occasionally be in the end mastered by men of slower intellect, I do not think it of so much importance as to wish men who have arrived at mature age to spend time in learning it. It is enough that boys should give attention to it; and even of these, not all who are to be fitted for usefulness in the Church, but only those who are not yet engaged in any occupation of more urgent necessity, or which ought evidently to take precedence of it. For men of quick intellect and glowing temperament find it easier to become eloquent by reading and listening to eloquent speakers than by following rules for eloquence. And even outside the canon, which to our great advantage is fixed in a place of secure authority, there is no want of ecclesiastical writings, in reading which a man of ability will acquire a tinge of the eloquence with which they are written, even though he does not aim at this, but is solely intent on the matters treated of; especially, of course, if in addition he practise himself in writing, or dictating, and at last also in speaking, the opinions he has formed on grounds of piety and faith. If, however, such ability be wanting, the rules of

rhetoric are either not understood, or if, after great labor has been spent in enforcing them, they come to be in some small measure understood, they prove of no service. For even those who have learnt them, and who speak with fluency and elegance, cannot always think of them when they are speaking so as to speak in accordance with them, unless they are discussing the rules themselves. Indeed, I think there are scarcely any who can do both things—that is, speak well, and, in order to do this, think of the rules of speaking while they are speaking. For we must be careful that what we have got to say does not escape us whilst we are thinking about saying it according to the rules of art. Nevertheless, in the speeches of eloquent men, we find rules of eloquence carried out which the speakers did not think of as aids to eloquence at the time when they were speaking, whether they had ever learnt them, or whether they had never even met with them. For it is because they are eloquent that they exemplify these rules; it is not that they use them in order to be eloquent.

5. And, therefore, as infants cannot learn to speak except by learning words and phrases from those who do speak, why should not men become eloquent without being taught any art of speech, simply by reading and learning the speeches of eloquent men, and by imitating them as far as they can? And what do we find from the examples themselves to be the case in this respect? We know numbers who, without acquaintance with rhetorical rules, are more eloquent than many who have learnt these; but we know no one who is eloquent without having read and listened to the speeches and debates of eloquent men. For even the art of grammar, which teaches correctness of speech, need not be learnt by boys, if they have the advantage of growing up and living among men who speak correctly. For without knowing the names of any of the faults, they will, from being accustomed to correct speech, lay hold upon whatever is faulty in the speech of any one they listen to, and avoid it; just as city-bred men, even when illiterate, seize upon the faults of rustics.

#### CHAPTER 4

#### THE DUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER

6. It is the duty, then, of the interpreter and teacher of Holy Scripture, the defender of the true faith and the opponent of error, both to teach what is right and to refute what is wrong, and in the performance of this task to conciliate the hostile, to rouse the careless, and to tell the ignorant both what is occurring at present and what is probable in the future. But once that his hearers are friendly, attentive, and ready to learn, whether he has found them so, or has himself made them so, the remaining objects are to be carried out in whatever way the case requires. If the hearers need teaching, the matter treated of must be made fully known by means of narrative. On the other hand, to clear up points that are doubtful requires reasoning and the exhibition of proof. If, however, the hearers require to be roused rather than instructed, in order that they may be diligent to do what they already know, and to bring their feelings into harmony with the truths they admit, greater vigor of speech is needed. Here entreaties and reproaches, exhortations and upbraidings, and all the other means of rousing the emotions, are necessary.

7. And all the methods I have mentioned are constantly used by nearly every one in cases where speech is the agency employed.

## CHAPTER 5

### WISDOM OF MORE IMPORTANCE THAN ELOQUENCE TO THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER

But as some men employ these coarsely, inelegantly, and frigidly, while others use them with acuteness, elegance, and spirit, the work that I am speaking of ought to be undertaken by one who can argue and speak with wisdom, if not with eloquence, and with profit to his hearers, even though he profit them less than he would if he could speak with eloquence too. But we must beware of the man who abounds in eloquent nonsense, and so much the more if the hearer is pleased with what is not worth listening to, and thinks that because the speaker is eloquent what he says must be true. And this opinion is held even by those who think that the art of rhetoric should be taught; for they confess that “though wisdom without eloquence is of little service to states, yet eloquence without wisdom is frequently a positive injury, and is of service never.” If, then, the men who teach the principles of eloquence have been forced by truth to confess this in the very

books which treat of eloquence, though they were ignorant of the true, that is, the heavenly wisdom which comes down from the Father of Lights, how much more ought we to feel it who are the sons and the ministers of this higher wisdom! Now a man speaks with more or less wisdom just as he has made more or less progress in the knowledge of Scripture; I do not mean by reading them much and committing them to memory, but by understanding them aright and carefully searching into their meaning. For there are who read and yet neglect them; they read to remember the words, but are careless about knowing the meaning. It is plain we must set far above these the men who are not so retentive of the words, but see with the eyes of the heart into the heart of Scripture. Better than either of these, however, is the man who, when he wishes, can repeat the words, and at the same time correctly apprehends their meaning.

8. Now it is especially necessary for the man who is bound to speak wisely, even though he cannot speak eloquently, to retain in memory the words of Scripture. For the more he discerns the poverty of his own speech, the more he ought to draw on the riches of Scripture, so that what he says in his own words he may prove by the words of Scripture; and he himself, though small and weak in his own words, may gain strength and power from the confirming testimony of great men. For his proof gives pleasure when he cannot please by his mode of speech. But if a man desire to speak not only with wisdom, but with eloquence also (and assuredly he will prove of greater service if he can do both), I would rather send him to read, and listen to, and exercise himself in imitating, eloquent men, than advise him to spend time with the teachers of rhetoric; especially if the men he reads and listens to are justly praised as having spoken, or as being accustomed to speak, not only with eloquence, but with wisdom also. For eloquent speakers are heard with pleasure; wise speakers with profit. And, therefore, Scripture does not say that the multitude of the eloquent, but “the multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world.” And as we must often swallow wholesome bitters, so we must always avoid unwholesome sweets. But what is better than wholesome sweetness or sweet wholesomeness? For the sweeter we try to make such things, the easier it is to make their wholesomeness serviceable. And so there are writers of the Church who have expounded the Holy Scriptures, not only with wisdom, but with

eloquence as well; and there is not more time for the reading of these than is sufficient for those who are studious and at leisure to exhaust them.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE SACRED WRITERS UNITE ELOQUENCE WITH WISDOM

9. Here, perhaps, some one inquires whether the authors whose divinely-inspired writings constitute the canon, which carries with it a most wholesome authority, are to be considered wise only, or eloquent as well. A question which to me, and to those who think with me, is very easily settled. For where I understand these writers, it seems to me not only that nothing can be wiser, but also that nothing can be more eloquent. And I venture to affirm that all who truly understand what these writers say, perceive at the same time that it could not have been properly said in any other way. For as there is a kind of eloquence that is more becoming in youth, and a kind that is more becoming in old age, and nothing can be called eloquence if it be not suitable to the person of the speaker, so there is a kind of eloquence that is becoming in men who justly claim the highest authority, and who are evidently inspired of God. With this eloquence they spoke; no other would have been suitable for them; and this itself would be unsuitable in any other, for it is in keeping with their character, while it mounts as far above that of others (not from empty inflation, but from solid merit) as it seems to fall below them. Where, however, I do not understand these writers, though their eloquence is then less apparent, I have no doubt but that it is of the same kind as that I do understand. The very obscurity, too, of these divine and wholesome words was a necessary element in eloquence of a kind that was designed to profit our understandings, not only by the discovery of truth, but also by the exercise of their powers.

10. I could, however, if I had time, show those men who cry up their own form of language as superior to that of our authors (not because of its majesty, but because of its inflation), that all those powers and beauties of eloquence which they make their boast, are to be found in the sacred writings which God in His goodness has provided to mould our characters, and to guide us from this world of wickedness to the blessed world above. But it is not the qualities which these writers have in common with the

heathen orators and poets that give me such unspeakable delight in their eloquence; I am more struck with admiration at the way in which, by an eloquence peculiarly their own, they so use this eloquence of ours that it is not conspicuous either by its presence or its absence: for it did not become them either to condemn it or to make an ostentatious display of it; and if they had shunned it, they would have done the former; if they had made it prominent, they might have appeared to be doing the latter. And in those passages where the learned do note its presence, the matters spoken of are such, that the words in which they are put seem not so much to be sought out by the speaker as spontaneously to suggest themselves; as if wisdom were walking out of its house,—that is, the breast of the wise man, and eloquence, like an inseparable attendant, followed it without being called for.

## CHAPTER 7

### EXAMPLES OF TRUE ELOQUENCE DRAWN FROM THE EPISTLES OF PAUL AND THE PROPHECIES OF AMOS

11. For who would not see what the apostle meant to say, and how wisely he has said it, in the following passage: “We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us”? Now were any man unlearnedly learned (if I may use the expression) to contend that the apostle had here followed the rules of rhetoric, would not every Christian, learned or unlearned, laugh at him? And yet here we find the figure which is called in Greek *klimaz* (climax,) and by some in Latin *gradatio*, for they do not care to call it *scala* (a ladder), when the words and ideas have a connection of dependency the one upon the other, as we see here that patience arises out of tribulation, experience out of patience, and hope out of experience. nother ornament, too, is found here; for after certain statements finished in a single tone of voice, which we call clauses and sections (*membra et caesa*), but the Greeks *kola* and *kommata*, there follows a rounded sentence (*ambitus sive circuitus*) which the Greeks call *periodos*, the clauses of which are suspended on the voice of the speaker till the whole is completed by the last clause. For of the statements which precede

the period, this is the first clause, “knowing that tribulation worketh patience;” the second, “and patience, experience;” the third, “and experience, hope.” Then the period which is subjoined is completed in three clauses, of which the first is, “and hope maketh not ashamed;” the second, “because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts;” the third, “by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” But these and other matters of the same kind are taught in the art of elocution. As then I do not affirm that the apostle was guided by the rules of eloquence, so I do not deny that his wisdom naturally produced, and was accompanied by, eloquence.

12. In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, again, he refutes certain false apostles who had gone out from the Jews, and had been trying to injure his character; and being compelled to speak of himself, though he ascribes this as folly to himself, how wisely and how eloquently he speaks! But wisdom is his guide, eloquence his attendant; he follows the first, the second follows him, and yet he does not spurn it when it comes after him. “I say again,” he says, “Let no man think me a fool: if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little. That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold (I speak foolishly), I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool), I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern my infirmities.” The thoughtful and attentive perceive how much wisdom there is in these words. And even a man sound asleep must notice what a stream of eloquence flows through them.

13. Further still, the educated man observes that those sections which the Greeks call *kommata*, and the clauses and periods of which I spoke a short time ago, being intermingled in the most beautiful variety, make up the whole form and features (so to speak) of that diction by which even the unlearned are delighted and affected. For, from the place where I commenced to quote, the passage consists of periods: the first the smallest possible, consisting of two members; for a period cannot have less than two members, though it may have more: “I say again, let no man think me a fool.” The next has three members: “if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.” The third has four members: “That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.” The fourth has two: “Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.” And the fifth has two: “For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.” The sixth again has two members: “for ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage.” Then follow three sections (*caesa*): “if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself.” Next three clauses (*membra*): if “a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak.” Then is subjoined a period of three members: “Howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold (I speak foolishly), I am bold also.” After this, certain separate sections being put in the interrogatory form, separate sections are also given as answers, three to three: “Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.” But a fourth section being put likewise in the interrogatory form, the answer is given not in another section (*caesum*) but in a clause (*membrum*): “Are they the ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool.) I am more.” Then the next four sections are given continuously, the interrogatory form being most elegantly suppressed: “in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.” Next is interposed a short period; for, by a suspension of the voice, “of the Jews five times” is to be marked off as constituting one member, to which is



joined the second, “received I forty stripes save one.” Then he returns to sections, and three are set down: “Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck.” Next comes a clause: “a night and a day I have been in the deep.” Next fourteen sections burst forth with a vehemence which is most appropriate: “In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.” After this comes in a period of three members: “Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” And to this he adds two clauses in a tone of inquiry: “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?” In fine, this whole passage, as if panting for breath, winds up with a period of two members: “If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.” And I cannot sufficiently express how beautiful and delightful it is when after this outburst he rests himself, and gives the hearer rest, by interposing a slight narrative. For he goes on to say: “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.” And then he tells, very briefly the danger he had been in, and the way he escaped it.

14. It would be tedious to pursue the matter further, or to point out the same facts in regard to other passages of Holy Scripture. Suppose I had taken the further trouble, at least in regard to the passages I have quoted from the apostle’s writings, to point out figures of speech which are taught in the art of rhetoric? Is it not more likely that serious men would think I had gone too far, than that any of the studious would think I had done enough? All these things when taught by masters are reckoned of great value; great prices are paid for them, and the vendors puff them magniloquently. And I fear lest I too should smack of that puffery while thus descanting on matters of this kind. It was necessary, however, to reply to the ill-taught men who think our authors contemptible; not because they do not possess, but because they do not display, the eloquence which these men value so highly.

15. But perhaps some one is thinking that I have selected the Apostle Paul because he is our great orator. For when he says, "Though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge," he seems to speak as if granting so much to his detractors, not as confessing that he recognized its truth. If he had said, "I am indeed rude in speech, but not in knowledge," we could not in any way have put another meaning upon it. He did not hesitate plainly to assert his knowledge, because without it he could not have been the teacher of the Gentiles. And certainly if we bring forward anything of his as a model of eloquence, we take it from those epistles which even his very detractors, who thought his bodily presence weak and his speech contemptible, confessed to be weighty and powerful.

I see, then, that I must say something about the eloquence of the prophets also, where many things are concealed under a metaphorical style, which the more completely they seem buried under figures of speech, give the greater pleasure when brought to light. In this place, however, it is my duty to select a passage of such a kind that I shall not be compelled to explain the matter, but only to commend the style. And I shall do so, quoting principally from the book of that prophet who says that he was a shepherd or herdsman, and was called by God from that occupation, and sent to prophesy to the people of God. I shall not, however, follow the Septuagint translators, who, being themselves under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their translation, seem to have altered some passages with the view of directing the reader's attention more particularly to the investigation of the spiritual sense; (and hence some passages are more obscure, because more figurative, in their translation;) but I shall follow the translation made from the Hebrew into Latin by the presbyter Jerome, a man thoroughly acquainted with both tongues.

16. When, then, this rustic, or quondam rustic prophet, was denouncing the godless, the proud, the luxurious, and therefore the most neglectful of brotherly love, he called aloud, saying: "Woe to you who are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, who are heads and chiefs of the people, entering with pomp into the house of Israel! Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines, and to all the best kingdoms of these: is their border

greater than your border? Ye that are set apart for the day of evil, and that come near to the seat of oppression; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch yourselves upon couches that eat the lamb of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd; that chant to the sound of the viol. They thought that they had instruments of music like David; drinking wine in bowls, and anointing themselves with the costliest ointment: and they were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.” Suppose those men who, assuming to be themselves learned and eloquent, despise our prophets as untaught and unskillful of speech, had been obliged to deliver a message like this, and to men such as these, would they have chosen to express themselves in any respect differently—those of them, at least, who would have shrunk from raving like madmen?

17. For what is there that sober ears could wish changed in this speech? In the first place, the invective itself; with what vehemence it throws itself upon the drowsy senses to startle them into wakefulness: “Woe to you who are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountains of Samaria, who are heads and chiefs of the people, entering with pomp into the house of Israel!” Next, that he may use the favors of God, who has bestowed upon them ample territory, to show their ingratitude in trusting to the mountain of Samaria, where idols were worshipped: “Pass ye unto Calneh,” he says, “and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines, and to all the best kingdoms of these: is their border greater than your border?” At the same time also that these things are spoken of, the style is adorned with names of places as with lamps, such as “Zion,” “Samaria,” “Calneh,” “Hamath the great,” and “Gath of the Philistines.” Then the words joined to these places are most appropriately varied: “ye are at ease,” “ye trust,” “pass on,” “go,” “descend.”

18. And then the future captivity under an oppressive king is announced as approaching, when it is added: “Ye that are set apart for the day of evil, and come near to the seat of oppression.” Then are subjoined the evils of luxury: “ye that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch yourselves upon couches; that eat the lamb from the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd.” These six clauses form three periods of two members each. For he does not say: Ye who are set apart for the day of evil, who come near to

the seat of oppression, who sleep upon beds of ivory, who stretch yourselves upon couches, who eat the lamb from the flock, and calves out of the herd. If he had so expressed it, this would have had its beauty: six separate clauses running on, the same pronoun being repeated each time, and each clause finished by a single effort of the speaker's voice. But it is more beautiful as it is, the clauses being joined in pairs under the same pronoun, and forming three sentences, one referring to the prophecy of the captivity: "Ye that are set apart for the day of evil, and come near the seat of oppression;" the second to lasciviousness: "ye that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch yourselves upon couches;" the third to gluttony: "who eat the lamb from the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd." So that it is at the discretion of the speaker whether he finish each clause separately and make six altogether, or whether he suspend his voice at the first, the third, and the fifth, and by joining the second to the first, the fourth to the third, and the sixth to the fifth, make three most elegant periods of two members each: one describing the imminent catastrophe; another, the lascivious couch; and the third, the luxurious table.

19. Next he reproaches them with their luxury in seeking pleasure for the sense of hearing. And here, when he had said, "Ye who chant to the sound of the viol," seeing that wise men may practise music wisely, he, with wonderful skill of speech, checks the flow of his invective, and not now speaking to, but of, these men, and to show us that we must distinguish the music of the wise from the music of the voluptuary, he does not say, "Ye who chant to the sound of the viol, and think that ye have instruments of music like David;" but he first addresses to themselves what it is right the voluptuaries should hear, "Ye who chant to the sound of the viol;" and then, turning to others, he intimates that these men have not even skill in their art: "they thought that they had instruments of music like David; drinking wine in bowls, and anointing themselves with the costliest ointment." These three clauses are best pronounced when the voice is suspended on the first two members of the period, and comes to a pause on the third.

20. But now as to the sentence which follows all these: "and they were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." Whether this be pronounced continuously as one clause, or whether with more elegance we hold the

words, “and they were not grieved,” suspended on the voice, and then add, “for the affliction of Joseph,” so as to make a period of two members; in any case, it is a touch of marvelous beauty not to say, “and they were not grieved for the affliction of their brother;” but to put Joseph for brother, so as to indicate brothers in general by the proper name of him who stands out illustrious from among his brethren, both in regard to the injuries he suffered and the good return he made. And, indeed, I do not know whether this figure of speech, by which Joseph is put for brothers in general, is one of those laid down in that art which I learnt and used to teach. But how beautiful it is, and how it comes home to the intelligent reader, it is useless to tell any one who does not himself feel it.

21. And a number of other points bearing on the laws of eloquence could be found in this passage which I have chosen as an example. But an intelligent reader will not be so much instructed by carefully analysing it as kindled by reciting it with spirit. Nor was it composed by man’s art and care, but it flowed forth in wisdom and eloquence from the Divine mind; wisdom not aiming at eloquence, yet eloquence not shrinking from wisdom. For if, as certain very eloquent and acute men have perceived and said, the rules which are laid down in the art of oratory could not have been observed, and noted, and reduced to system, if they had not first had their birth in the genius of orators, is it wonderful that they should be found in the messengers of Him who is the author of all genius? Therefore let us acknowledge that the canonical writers are not only wise but eloquent also, with an eloquence suited to a character and position like theirs.

## CHAPTER 8

THE OBSCURITY OF THE SACRED WRITERS, THOUGH COMPATIBLE WITH  
ELOQUENCE, NOT TO BE IMITATED BY CHRISTIAN TEACHERS

22. But although I take some examples of eloquence from those writings of theirs which there is no difficulty in understanding, we are not by any means to suppose that it is our duty to imitate them in those passages where, with a view to exercise and train the minds of their readers, and to break in upon the satiety and stimulate the zeal of those who are willing to learn, and with a view also to throw a veil over the minds of the godless either that

they may be converted to piety or shut out from a knowledge of the mysteries, from one or other of these reasons they have expressed themselves with a useful and wholesome obscurity. They have indeed expressed themselves in such a way that those who in after ages understood and explained them aright have in the Church of God obtained an esteem, not indeed equal to that with which they are themselves regarded, but coming next to it. The expositors of these writers, then, ought not to express themselves in the same way, as if putting forward their expositions as of the same authority; but they ought in all their deliverances to make it their first and chief aim to be understood, using as far as possible such clearness of speech that either he will be very dull who does not understand them, or that if what they say should not be very easily or quickly understood, the reason will lie not in their manner of expression, but in the difficulty and subtilty of the matter they are trying to explain.

## CHAPTER 9

### HOW, AND WITH WHOM, DIFFICULT PASSAGES ARE TO BE DISCUSSED

23. For there are some passages which are not understood in their proper force, or are understood with great difficulty, at whatever length, however clearly, or with whatever eloquence the speaker may expound them; and these should never be brought before the people at all, or only on rare occasions when there is some urgent reason. In books, however, which are written in such a style that, if understood, they, so to speak, draw their own readers, and if not understood, give no trouble to those who do not care to read them and in private conversations, we must not shrink from the duty of bringing the truth which we ourselves have reached within the comprehension of others, however difficult it may be to understand it, and whatever labor in the way of argument it may cost us. Only two conditions are to be insisted upon, that our hearer or companion should have an earnest desire to learn the truth, and should have capacity of mind to receive it in whatever form it may be communicated, the teacher not being so anxious about the eloquence as about the clearness of his teaching.

24. Now a strong desire for clearness sometimes leads to neglect of the more polished forms of speech, and indifference about what sounds well, compared with what clearly expresses and conveys the meaning intended. Whence a certain author, when dealing with speech of this kind, says that there is in it “a kind of careful negligence.” Yet while taking away ornament, it does not bring in vulgarity of speech; though good teachers have, or ought to have, so great an anxiety about teaching that they will employ a word which cannot be made pure Latin without becoming obscure or ambiguous, but which when used according to the vulgar idiom is neither ambiguous nor obscure, not in the way the learned, but rather in the way the unlearned employ it. For if our translators did not shrink from saying, “Non congregabo conventicula eorum de sanguinibus,” because they felt that it was important for the sense to put a word here in the plural which in Latin is only used in the singular; why should a teacher of godliness who is addressing an unlearned audience shrink from using *ossum* instead of *os*, if he fear that the latter might be taken not as the singular of *ossa*, but as the singular of *ora*, seeing that African ears have no quick perception of the shortness or length of vowels? And what advantage is there in purity of speech which does not lead to understanding in the hearer, seeing that there is no use at all in speaking, if they do not understand us for whose sake we speak? He, therefore, who teaches will avoid all words that do not teach; and if instead of them he can find words which are at once pure and intelligible, he will take these by preference; if, however, he cannot, either because there are no such words, or because they do not at the time occur to him, he will use words that are not quite pure, if only the substance of his thought be conveyed and apprehended in its integrity.

25. And this must be insisted on as necessary to our being understood, not only in conversations, whether with one person or with several, but much more in the case of a speech delivered in public: for in conversation any one has the power of asking a question; but when all are silent that one may be heard, and all faces are turned attentively upon him, it is neither customary nor decorous for a person to ask a question about what he does not

understand; and on this account the speaker ought to be especially careful to give assistance to those who cannot ask it. Now a crowd anxious for instruction generally shows by its movements if it understands what is said; and until some indication of this sort be given, the subject discussed ought to be turned over and over, and put in every shape and form and variety of expression, a thing which cannot be done by men who are repeating words prepared beforehand and committed to memory. As soon, however, as the speaker has ascertained that what he says is understood, he ought either to bring his address to a close, or pass on to another point. For if a man gives pleasure when he throws light upon points on which people wish for instruction, he becomes wearisome when he dwells at length upon things that are already well known, especially when men's expectation was fixed on having the difficulties of the passage removed. For even things that are very well known are told for the sake of the pleasure they give, if the attention be directed not to the things themselves, but to the way in which they are told. Nay, even when the style itself is already well known, if it be pleasing to the hearers, it is almost a matter of indifference whether he who speaks be a speaker or a reader. For things that are gracefully written are often not only read with delight by those who are making their first acquaintance with them, but re-read with delight by those who have already made acquaintance with them, and have not yet forgotten them; nay, both these classes will derive pleasure even from hearing another man repeat them. And if a man has forgotten anything, when he is reminded of it he is taught. But I am not now treating of the mode of giving pleasure. I am speaking of the mode in which men who desire to learn ought to be taught. And the best mode is that which secures that he who hears shall hear the truth, and that what he hears he shall understand. And when this point has been reached, no further labor need be spent on the truth itself, as if it required further explanation; but perhaps some trouble may be taken to enforce it so as to bring it home to the heart. If it appear right to do this, it ought to be done so moderately as not to lead to weariness and impatience.

## CHAPTER 11

### THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER MUST SPEAK CLEARLY, BUT NOT INELEGANTLY



26. For teaching, of course, true eloquence consists, not in making people like what they disliked, nor in making them do what they shrank from, but in making clear what was obscure; yet if this be done without grace of style, the benefit does not extend beyond the few eager students who are anxious to know whatever is to be learnt, however rude and unpolished the form in which it is put; and who, when they have succeeded in their object, find the plain truth pleasant food enough. And it is one of the distinctive features of good intellects not to love words, but the truth in words. For of what service is a golden key, if it cannot open what we want it to open? Or what objection is there to a wooden one if it can, seeing that to open what is shut is all we want? But as there is a certain analogy between learning and eating, the very food without which it is impossible to live must be flavored to meet the tastes of the majority.

## CHAPTER 12

THE AIM OF THE ORATOR, ACCORDING TO CICERO, IS TO TEACH, TO DELIGHT, AND TO MOVE. OF THESE, TEACHING IS THE MOST ESSENTIAL

27. Accordingly a great orator has truly said that “an eloquent man must speak so as to teach, to delight, and to persuade.” Then he adds: “To teach is a necessity, to delight is a beauty, to persuade is a triumph.” Now of these three, the one first mentioned, the teaching, which is a matter of necessity, depends on what we say; the other two on the way we say it. He, then, who speaks with the purpose of teaching should not suppose that he has said what he has to say as long as he is not understood; for although what he has said be intelligible to himself it is not said at all to the man who does not understand it. If, however, he is understood, he has said his say, whatever may have been his manner of saying it. But if he wishes to delight or persuade his hearer as well, he will not accomplish that end by putting his thought in any shape no matter what, but for that purpose the style of speaking is a matter of importance. And as the hearer must be pleased in order to secure his attention, so he must be persuaded in order to move him to action. And as he is pleased if you speak with sweetness and elegance, so he is persuaded if he be drawn by your promises, and awed by your threats; if he reject what you condemn, and embrace what you commend; if he grieve when you heap up objects for grief, and rejoice when you point out

an object for joy; if he pity those whom you present to him as objects of pity, and shrink from those whom you set before him as men to be feared and shunned. I need not go over all the other things that can be done by powerful eloquence to move the minds of the hearers, not telling them what they ought to do, but urging them to do what they already know ought to be done.

28. If, however, they do not yet know this, they must of course be instructed before they can be moved. And perhaps the mere knowledge of their duty will have such an effect that there will be no need to move them with greater strength of eloquence. Yet when this is needful, it ought to be done. And it is needful when people, knowing what they ought to do, do it not. Therefore, to teach is a necessity. For what men know, it is in their own hands either to do or not to do. But who would say that it is their duty to do what they do not know? On the same principle, to persuade is not a necessity: for it is not always called for; as, for example, when the hearer yields his assent to one who simply teaches or gives pleasure. For this reason also to persuade is a triumph, because it is possible that a man may be taught and delighted, and yet not give his consent. And what will be the use of gaining the first two ends if we fail in the third? Neither is it a necessity to give pleasure; for when, in the course of an address, the truth is clearly pointed out (and this is the true function of teaching), it is not the fact, nor is it the intention, that the style of speech should make the truth pleasing, or that the style should of itself give pleasure; but the truth itself, when exhibited in its naked simplicity, gives pleasure, because it is the truth. And hence even falsities are frequently a source of pleasure when they are brought to light and exposed. It is not, of course, their falsity that gives pleasure; but as it is true that they are false, the speech which shows this to be true gives pleasure.

## CHAPTER 13

### THE HEARER MUST BE MOVED AS WELL AS INSTRUCTED

29. But for the sake of those who are so fastidious that they do not care for truth unless it is put in the form of a pleasing discourse, no small place has been assigned in eloquence to the art of pleasing. And yet even this is not

enough for those stubborn-minded men who both understand and are pleased with the teacher's discourse, without deriving any profit from it. For what does it profit a man that he both confesses the truth and praises the eloquence, if he does not yield his consent, when it is only for the sake of securing his consent that the speaker in urging the truth gives careful attention to what he says? If the truths taught are such that to believe or to know them is enough, to give one's assent implies nothing more than to confess that they are true. When, however, the truth taught is one that must be carried into practice, and that is taught for the very purpose of being practiced, it is useless to be persuaded of the truth of what is said, it is useless to be pleased with the manner in which it is said, if it be not so learnt as to be practiced. The eloquent divine, then, when he is urging a practical truth, must not only teach so as to give instruction, and please so as to keep up the attention, but he must also sway the mind so as to subdue the will. For if a man be not moved by the force of truth, though it is demonstrated to his own confession, and clothed in beauty of style, nothing remains but to subdue him by the power of eloquence.

#### CHAPTER 14

##### BEAUTY OF DICTION TO BE IN KEEPING WITH THE MATTER

30. And so much labor has been spent by men on the beauty of expression here spoken of, that not only is it not our duty to do, but it is our duty to shun and abhor, many and heinous deeds of wickedness and baseness which wicked and base men have with great eloquence recommended, not with a view to gaining assent, but merely for the sake of being read with pleasure. But may God avert from His Church what the prophet Jeremiah says of the synagogue of the Jews: "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests applaud them with their hands; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" O eloquence, which is the more terrible from its purity, and the more crushing from its solidity! Assuredly it is "a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." For to this God Himself has by the same prophet compared His own word spoken through His holy prophets. God forbid, then, God forbid that with us the priest should applaud the false prophet, and that God's people should love to have it so. God forbid, I say, that with us there

should be such terrible madness! For what shall we do in the end thereof? And assuredly it is preferable, even though what is said should be less intelligible, less pleasing, and less persuasive, that truth be spoken, and that what is just, not what is iniquitous, be listened to with pleasure. But this, of course, cannot be, unless what is true and just be expressed with elegance.

31. In a serious assembly, moreover, such as is spoken of when it is said, “I will praise Thee among much people,” no pleasure is derived from that species of eloquence which indeed says nothing that is false, but which buries small and unimportant truths under a frothy mass of ornamental words, such as would not be graceful or dignified even if used to adorn great and fundamental truths. And something of this sort occurs in a letter of the blessed Cyprian, which, I think, came there by accident, or else was inserted designedly with this view, that posterity might see how the wholesome discipline of Christian teaching had cured him of that redundancy of language, and confined him to a more dignified and modest form of eloquence, such as we find in his subsequent letters, a style which is admired without effort, is sought after with eagerness, but is not attained without great difficulty. He says, then, in one place, “Let us seek this abode: the neighboring solitudes afford a retreat where, whilst the spreading shoots of the vine trees, pendulous and intertwined, creep amongst the supporting reeds, the leafy covering has made a portico of vine.” There is wonderful fluency and exuberance of language here; but it is too florid to be pleasing to serious minds. But people who are fond of this style are apt to think that men who do not use it, but employ a more chastened style, do so because they cannot attain the former, not because their judgment teaches them to avoid it. Wherefore this holy man shows both that he can speak in that style, for he has done so once, and that he does not choose, for he never uses it again.

## CHAPTER 15

### THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER SHOULD PRAY BEFORE PREACHING

32. And so our Christian orator, while he says what is just, and holy, and good (and he ought never to say anything else), does all he can to be heard with intelligence, with pleasure, and with obedience; and he need not doubt

that if he succeed in this object, and so far as he succeeds, he will succeed more by piety in prayer than by gifts of oratory; and so he ought to pray for himself, and for those he is about to address, before he attempts to speak. And when the hour is come that he must speak, he ought, before he opens his mouth, to lift up his thirsty soul to God, to drink in what he is about to pour forth, and to be himself filled with what he is about to distribute. For, as in regard to every matter of faith and love there are many things that may be said, and many ways of saying them, who knows what it is expedient at a given moment for us to say, or to be heard saying, except God who knows the hearts of all? And who can make us say what we ought, and in the way we ought, except Him in whose hand both we and our speeches are? Accordingly, he who is anxious both to know and to teach should learn all that is to be taught, and acquire such a faculty of speech as is suitable for a divine. But when the hour for speech arrives, let him reflect upon that saying of our Lord's as better suited to the wants of a pious mind: "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." The Holy Spirit, then, speaks thus in those who for Christ's sake are delivered to the persecutors; why not also in those who deliver Christ's message to those who are willing to learn?

## CHAPTER 16

### HUMAN DIRECTIONS NOT TO BE DESPISED, THOUGH GOD MAKES THE TRUE TEACHER

33. Now if any one says that we need not direct men how or what they should teach, since the Holy Spirit makes them teachers, he may as well say that we need not pray, since our Lord says, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him;" or that the Apostle Paul should not have given directions to Timothy and Titus as to how or what they should teach others. And these three apostolic epistles ought to be constantly before the eyes of every one who has obtained the position of a teacher in the Church. In the First Epistle to Timothy do we not read: "These things command and teach?" What these things are, has been told previously. Do we not read there: "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father?" Is it not said in the Second Epistle: "Hold fast the form of sound

words, which thou hast heard of me?” And is he not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth?” And in the same place: “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.” And so in the Epistle to Titus, does he not say that a bishop ought to “hold fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers?” There, too, he says: “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober,” and so on. And there, too: “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers,” and so on. What then are we to think? Does the apostle in any way contradict himself, when, though he says that men are made teachers by the operation of the Holy Spirit, he yet himself gives them directions how and what they should teach? Or are we to understand, that though the duty of men to teach even the teachers does not cease when the Holy Spirit is given, yet that neither is he who planteth anything, nor he who watereth, but God who giveth the increase? Wherefore though holy men be our helpers, or even holy angels assist us, no one learns aright the things that pertain to life with God, until God makes him ready to learn from Himself, that God who is thus addressed in the psalm: “Teach me to do Thy will; for Thou art my God.” And so the same apostle says to Timothy himself, speaking, of course, as teacher to disciple: “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.” For as the medicines which men apply to the bodies of their fellow-men are of no avail except God gives them virtue (who can heal without their aid, though they cannot without His), and yet they are applied; and if it be done from a sense of duty, it is esteemed a work of mercy or benevolence; so the aids of teaching, applied through the instrumentality of man, are of advantage to the soul only when God works to make them of advantage, who could give the gospel to man even without the help or agency of men.

## CHAPTER 17

### THREEFOLD DIVISION OF THE VARIOUS STYLES OF SPEECH

34. He then who, in speaking, aims at enforcing what is good, should not despise any of those three objects, either to teach, or to give pleasure, or to move, and should pray and strive, as we have said above, to be heard with intelligence, with pleasure, and with ready compliance. And when he does this with elegance and propriety, he may justly be called eloquent, even though he do not carry with him the assent of his hearer. For it is these three ends, viz., teaching, giving pleasure, and moving, that the great master of Roman eloquence himself seems to have intended that the following three directions should subserve: “He, then, shall be eloquent, who can say little things in a subdued style, moderate things in a temperate style, and great things in a majestic style:” as if he had taken in also the three ends mentioned above, and had embraced the whole in one sentence thus: “He, then, shall be eloquent, who can say little things in a subdued style, in order to give instruction, moderate things in a temperate style, in order to give pleasure, and great things in a majestic style, in order to sway the mind.”

## CHAPTER 18

### THE CHRISTIAN ORATOR IS CONSTANTLY DEALING WITH GREAT MATTERS

35. Now the author I have quoted could have exemplified these three directions, as laid down by himself, in regard to legal questions: he could not, however, have done so in regard to ecclesiastical questions,—the only ones that an address such as I wish to give shape to is concerned with. For of legal questions those are called small which have reference to pecuniary transactions; those great where a matter relating to man’s life or liberty comes up. Cases, again, which have to do with neither of these, and where the intention is not to get the hearer to do, or to pronounce judgment upon anything, but only to give him pleasure, occupy as it were a middle place between the former two, and are on that account called middling, or moderate. For moderate things get their name from *modus* (a measure); and it is an abuse, not a proper use of the word moderate, to put it for little. In questions like ours, however, where all things, and especially those addressed to the people from the place of authority, ought to have reference to men’s salvation, and that not their temporal but their eternal salvation, and where also the thing to be guarded against is eternal ruin, everything that we say is important; so much so, that even what the preacher says about

pecuniary matters, whether it have reference to loss or gain, whether the amount be great or small, should not seem unimportant. For justice is never unimportant, and justice ought assuredly to be observed, even in small affairs of money, as our Lord says: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." That which is least, then, is very little; but to be faithful in that which is least is great. For as the nature of the circle, viz., that all lines drawn from the centre to the circumference are equal, is the same in a great disk that it is in the smallest coin; so the greatness of justice is in no degree lessened, though the matters to which justice is applied be small.

36. And when the apostle spoke about trials in regard to secular affairs (and what were these but matters of money?), he says: "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If, then, ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the Church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another: why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" Why is it that the apostle is so indignant, and that he thus accuses, and upbraids, and chides, and threatens? Why is it that the changes in his tone, so frequent and so abrupt, testify to the depth of his emotion? Why is it, in fine, that he speaks in a tone so exalted about matters so very trifling? Did secular matters deserve so much at his hands? God forbid. No; but all this is done for the sake of justice, charity, and piety, which in the judgment of every sober mind are great, even when applied to matters the very least.

37. Of course, if we were giving men *ad vice* as to how they ought to conduct secular cases, either for themselves or for their connections, before



the church courts, we would rightly advise them to conduct them quietly as matters of little moment. But we are treating of the manner of speech of the man who is to be a teacher of the truths which deliver us from eternal misery and bring us to eternal happiness; and wherever these truths are spoken of, whether in public or private, whether to one or many, whether to friends or enemies, whether in a continuous discourse or in conversation, whether in tracts, or in books, or in letters long or short, they are of great importance. Unless indeed we are prepared to say that, because a cup of cold water is a very trifling and common thing, the saying of our Lord that he who gives a cup of cold water to one of His disciples shall in no wise lose his reward, is very trivial and unimportant. Or that when a preacher takes this saying as his text, he should think his subject very unimportant, and therefore speak without either eloquence or power, but in a subdued and humble style. Is it not the case that when we happen to speak on this subject to the people, and the presence of God is with us, so that what we say is not altogether unworthy of the subject, a tongue of fire springs up out of that cold water which inflames even the cold hearts of men with a zeal for doing works of mercy in hope of an eternal reward?

## CHAPTER 19

### THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER MUST USE DIFFERENT STYLES ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS

38. And yet, while our teacher ought to speak of great matters, he ought not always to be speaking of them in a majestic tone, but in a subdued tone when he is teaching, temperately when he is giving praise or blame. When, however, something is to be done, and we are speaking to those who ought, but are not willing, to do it, then great matters must be spoken of with power, and in a manner calculated to sway the mind. And sometimes the same important matter is treated in all these ways at different times, quietly when it is being taught, temperately when its importance is being urged, and powerfully when we are forcing a mind that is averse to the truth to turn and embrace it. For is there anything greater than God Himself? Is nothing, then, to be learnt about Him? Or ought he who is teaching the Trinity in unity to speak of it otherwise than in the method of calm discussion, so that in regard to a subject which it is not easy to comprehend, we may understand as much as it is given us to understand? Are we in this case to

seek out ornaments instead of proofs? Or is the hearer to be moved to do something instead of being instructed so that he may learn something? But when we come to praise God, either in Himself, or in His works, what a field for beauty and splendor of language opens up before man, who can task his powers to the utmost in praising Him whom no one can adequately praise, though there is no one who does not praise Him in some measure! But if He be not worshipped, or if idols, whether they be demons or any created being whatever, be worshipped with Him or in preference to Him, then we ought to speak out with power and impressiveness, show how great a wickedness this is, and urge men to flee from it.

## CHAPTER 20

### EXAMPLES OF THE VARIOUS STYLES DRAWN FROM SCRIPTURE

39. But now to come to something more definite. We have an example of the calm, subdued style in the Apostle Paul, where he says: “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all;” and so on. And in the same way where he reasons thus: “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.” And because it might possibly occur to the hearer to ask, If there is no inheritance by the law, why then was the law given? he himself anticipates this objection and asks, “Wherefore then serveth the law?” And the answer is given: “It was added because of

transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one.” And here an objection occurs which he himself has stated: “Is the law then against the promises of God?” He answers: “God forbid.” And he also states the reason in these words: “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” It is part, then, of the duty of the teacher not only to interpret what is obscure, and to unravel the difficulties of questions, but also, while doing this, to meet other questions which may chance to suggest themselves, lest these should cast doubt or discredit on what we say. If, however, the solution of these questions suggest itself as soon as the questions themselves arise, it is useless to disturb what we cannot remove. And besides, when out of one question other questions arise, and out of these again still others; if these be all discussed and solved, the reasoning is extended to such a length, that unless the memory be exceedingly powerful and active the reasoner finds it impossible to return to the original question from which he set out. It is, however, exceedingly desirable that whatever occurs to the mind as an objection that might be urged should be stated and refuted, lest it turn up at a time when no one will be present to answer it, or lest, if it should occur to a man who is present but says nothing about it, it might never be thoroughly removed.

40. In the following words of the apostle we have the temperate style: “Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters.” And also in these: “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” And almost the whole of this hortatory passage is in the temperate style of eloquence; and those parts of it are the most beautiful in which, as if paying what was due, things that belong to each other are gracefully brought together. For example: “Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on

exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another.” And how gracefully all this is brought to a close in a period of two members: “Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate!” And a little afterwards: “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.” And these also, though expressed in single clauses, are terminated by a period of two members: “Owe no man anything, but to love one another.” And a little farther on: “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.” Now if the passage were translated thus, “*et carnis providentiam ne in concupiscentiis feceritis*,” the ear would no doubt be gratified with a more harmonious ending; but our translator, with more strictness, preferred to retain even the order of the words. And how this sounds in the Greek language, in which the apostle spoke, those who are better skilled in that tongue may determine. My opinion, however, is, that what has been translated to us in the same order of words does not run very harmoniously even in the original tongue.

41. And, indeed, I must confess that our authors are very defective in that grace of speech which consists in harmonious endings. Whether this be the fault of the translators, or whether, as I am more inclined to believe, the authors designedly avoided such ornament, I dare not affirm; for I confess I do not know. This I know, however, that if any one who is skilled in this species of harmony would take the closing sentences of these writers and arrange them according to the law of harmony (which he could very easily

do by changing some words for words of equivalent meaning, or by retaining the words he finds and altering their arrangement), he will learn that these divinely-inspired men are not defective in any of those points which he has been taught in the schools of the grammarians and rhetoricians to consider of importance; and he will find in them many kinds of speech of great beauty,—beautiful even in our language, but especially beautiful in the original,—none of which can be found in those writings of which they boast so much. But care must be taken that, while adding harmony, we take away none of the weight from these divine and authoritative utterances. Now our prophets were so far from being deficient in the musical training from which this harmony we speak of is most fully learnt, that Jerome, a very learned man, describes even the metres employed by some of them, in the Hebrew language at least; though, in order to give an accurate rendering of the words, he has not preserved these in his translation. I, however (to speak of my own feeling, which is better known to me than it is to others, and than that of others is to me), while I do not in my own speech, however modestly I think it done, neglect these harmonious endings, am just as well pleased to find them in the sacred authors very rarely.

42. The majestic style of speech differs from the temperate style just spoken of, chiefly in that it is not so much decked out with verbal ornaments as exalted into vehemence by mental emotion. It uses, indeed, nearly all the ornaments that the other does; but if they do not happen to be at hand, it does not seek for them. For it is borne on by its own vehemence; and the force of the thought, not the desire for ornament, makes it seize upon any beauty of expression that comes in its way. It is enough for its object that warmth of feeling should suggest the fitting words; they need not be selected by careful elaboration of speech. If a brave man be armed with weapons adorned with gold and jewels, he works feats of valor with those arms in the heat of battle, not because they are costly, but because they are arms; and yet the same man does great execution, even when anger furnishes him with a weapon that he digs out of the ground. The apostle in the following passage is urging that, for the sake of the ministry of the gospel, and sustained by the consolations of God's grace, we should bear with patience all the evils of this life. It is a great subject, and is treated with

power, and the ornaments of speech are not wanting: “Behold,” he says, “now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in strifes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” See him still burning: “O ye Corinthians, our mouth is opened unto you, our heart is enlarged,” and so on; it would be tedious to go through it all.

43. And in the same way, writing to the Romans, he urges that the persecutions of this world should be overcome by charity, in assured reliance on the help of God. And he treats this subject with both power and beauty: “We know,” he says, “that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor

angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

44. Again, in writing to the Galatians, although the whole epistle is written in the subdued style, except at the end, where it rises into a temperate eloquence, yet he interposes one passage of so much feeling that, notwithstanding the absence of any ornaments such as appear in the passages just quoted, it cannot be called anything but powerful: “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.” Is there anything here of contrasted words arranged antithetically, or of words rising gradually to a climax, or of sonorous clauses, and sections, and periods? Yet, notwithstanding, there is a glow of strong emotion that makes us feel the fervor of eloquence.

## CHAPTER 21

EXAMPLES OF THE VARIOUS STYLES, DRAWN FROM THE TEACHERS OF THE CHURCH, ESPECIALLY AMBROSE AND CYPRIAN

45. But these writings of the apostles, though clear, are yet profound, and are so written that one who is not content with a superficial acquaintance, but desires to know them thoroughly, must not only read and hear them, but must have an expositor. Let us, then, study these various modes of speech

as they are exemplified in the writings of men who, by reading the Scriptures, have attained to the knowledge of divine and saving truth, and have ministered it to the Church. Cyprian of blessed memory writes in the subdued style in his treatise on the sacrament of the cup. In this book he resolves the question, whether the cup of the Lord ought to contain water only, or water mingled with wine. But we must quote a passage by way of illustration. After the customary introduction, he proceeds to the discussion of the point in question. "Observe" he says, "that we are instructed, in presenting the cup, to maintain the custom handed down to us from the Lord, and to do nothing that our Lord has not first done for us: so that the cup which is offered in remembrance of Him should be mixed with wine. For, as Christ says, I am the true vine,' it follows that the blood of Christ is wine, not water; and the cup cannot appear to contain His blood by which we are redeemed and quickened, if the wine be absent; for by the wine is the blood of Christ typified, that blood which is foreshadowed and proclaimed in all the types and declarations of Scripture. For we find that in the book of Genesis this very circumstance in regard to the sacrament is foreshadowed, and our Lord's sufferings typically set forth, in the case of Noah, when he drank wine, and was drunken, and was uncovered within his tent, and his nakedness was exposed by his second son, and was carefully hidden by his elder and his younger sons. It is not necessary to mention the other circumstances in detail, as it is only necessary to observe this point, that Noah, foreshadowing the future reality, drank, not water, but wine, and thus showed forth our Lord's passion. In the same way we see the sacrament of the Lord's supper prefigured in the case of Melchizedek the priest, according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, where it says: And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed Abraham.' Now, that Melchizedek was a type of Christ, the Holy Spirit declares in the Psalms, where the Father addressing the Son says, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.' " In this passage, and in all of the letter that follows, the subdued style is maintained, as the reader may easily satisfy himself.

46. St. Ambrose also, though dealing with a question of very great importance, the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son, employs the subdued style, because the object he has in view demands, not



beauty of diction, nor the swaying of the mind by the stir of emotion, but facts and proofs. Accordingly, in the introduction to his work, we find the following passage among others: “When Gideon was startled by the message he had heard from God, that, though thousands of the people failed, yet through one man God would deliver His people from their enemies, he brought forth a kid of the goats, and by direction of the angel laid it with unleavened cakes upon a rock, and poured the broth over it; and as soon as the angel of God touched it with the end of the staff that was in his hand, there rose up fire out of the rock and consumed the offering. Now this sign seems to indicate that the rock was a type of the body of Christ, for it is written, They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ;’ this, of course, referring not to Christ’s divine nature but to His flesh, whose ever-flowing fountain of blood has ever satisfied the hearts of His thirsting people. And so it was at that time declared in a mystery that the Lord Jesus, when crucified, should abolish in His flesh the sins of the whole world, and not their guilty acts merely, but the evil lusts of their hearts. For the kid’s flesh refers to the guilt of the outward act, the broth to the allurements of lust within, as it is written, And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again and again and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?’ When the angel, then, stretched out his staff and touched the rock, and fire rose out of it, this was a sign that our Lord’s flesh, filled with the Spirit of God, should burn up all the sins of the human race. Whence also the Lord says I am come to send fire on the earth.” And in the same style he pursues the subject, devoting himself chiefly to proving and enforcing his point.

47. An example of the temperate style is the celebrated encomium on virginity from Cyprian: “Now our discourse addresses itself to the virgins, who, as they are the objects of higher honor, are also the objects of greater care. These are the flowers on the tree of the Church, the glory and ornament of spiritual grace, the joy of honor and praise, a work unbroken and unblemished, the image of God answering to the holiness of the Lord, the brighter portion of the flock of Christ. The glorious fruitfulness of their mother the Church rejoices in them, and in them flourishes more abundantly; and in proportion as bright virginity adds to her numbers, in the same proportion does the mother’s joy increase. And at another place in the

end of the epistle, 'As we have borne,' he says, 'the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.' Virginity bears this image, integrity bears it, holiness and truth bear it; they bear it who are mindful of the chastening of the Lord, who observe justice and piety, who are strong in faith, humble in fear, steadfast in the endurance of suffering, meek in the endurance of injury, ready to pity, of one mind and of one heart in brotherly peace. And every one of these things ought ye, holy virgins, to observe, to cherish, and fulfill, who having hearts at leisure for God and for Christ, and having chosen the greater and better part, lead and point the way to the Lord, to whom you have pledged your vows. Ye who are advanced in age, exercise control over the younger. Ye who are younger, wait upon the elders, and encourage your equals; stir up one another by mutual exhortations; provoke one another to glory by emulous examples of virtue; endure bravely, advance in spirituality, finish your course with joy; only be mindful of us when your virginity shall begin to reap its reward of honor."

48. Ambrose also uses the temperate and ornamented style when he is holding up before virgins who have made their profession a model for their imitation, and says: "She was a virgin not in body only, but also in mind; not mingling the purity of her affection with any dross of hypocrisy; serious in speech; prudent in disposition; sparing of words; delighting in study; not placing her confidence in uncertain riches, but in the prayer of the poor; diligent in labor; reverent in word; accustomed to look to God, not man, as the guide of her conscience; injuring no one, wishing well to all; dutiful to her elders, not envious of her equals; avoiding boastfulness, following reason, loving virtue. When did she wound her parents even by a look? When did she quarrel with her neighbors? When did she spurn the humble, laugh at the weak, or shun the indigent? She is accustomed to visit only those haunts of men that pity would not blush for, nor modesty pass by. There is nothing haughty in her eyes, nothing bold in her words, nothing wanton in her gestures: her bearing is not voluptuous, nor her gait too free, nor her voice petulant; so that her outward appearance is an image of her mind, and a picture of purity. For a good house ought to be known for such at the very threshold, and show at the very entrance that there is no dark recess within, as the light of a lamp set inside sheds its radiance on the outside. Why need I detail her sparingness in food, her superabundance in

duty,—the one falling beneath the demands of nature, the other rising above its powers? The latter has no intervals of intermission, the former doubles the days by fasting; and when the desire for refreshment does arise, it is satisfied with food such as will support life, but not minister to appetite.” Now I have cited these latter passages as examples of the temperate style, because their purpose is not to induce those who have not yet devoted themselves to take the vows of virginity, but to show of what character those who have taken vows ought to be. To prevail on any one to take a step of such a nature and of so great importance, requires that the mind should be excited and set on fire by the majestic style. Cyprian the martyr, however, did not write about the duty of taking up the profession of virginity, but about the dress and deportment of virgins. Yet that great bishop urges them to their duty even in these respects by the power of a majestic eloquence.

49. But I shall select examples of the majestic style from their treatment of a subject which both of them have touched. Both have denounced the women who color, or rather discolor, their faces with paint. And the first, in dealing with this topic, says: “Suppose a painter should depict in colors that rival nature’s the features and form and complexion of some man, and that, when the portrait had been finished with consummate art, another painter should put his hand over it, as if to improve by his superior skill the painting already completed; surely the first artist would feel deeply insulted, and his indignation would be justly roused. Dost thou, then, think that thou wilt carry off with impunity so audacious an act of wickedness, such an insult to God the great artificer? For, granting that thou art not immodest in thy behavior towards men, and that thou art not polluted in mind by these meretricious deceits, yet, in corrupting and violating what is God’s, thou provest thyself worse than an adulteress. The fact that thou considerest thyself adorned and beautified by such arts is an impeachment of God’s handiwork, and a violation of truth. Listen to the warning voice of the apostle: Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.’ Now can sincerity and truth continue to exist when what is sincere is polluted, and

what is true is changed by meretricious coloring and the deceptions of quackery into a lie? Thy Lord says, Thou canst not make one hair white or black;’ and dost thou wish to have greater power so as to bring to nought the words of thy Lord? With rash and sacrilegious hand thou wouldst fain change the color of thy hair: I would that, with a prophetic look to the future, thou shouldst dye it the color of flame.” It would be too long to quote all that follows.

50. Ambrose again, inveighing against such practices, says: “Hence arise these incentives to vice, that women, in their fear that they may not prove attractive to men, paint their faces with carefully-chosen colors, and then from stains on their features go on to stains on their chastity. What folly it is to change the features of nature into those of painting, and from fear of incurring their husband’s disapproval, to proclaim openly that they have incurred their own! For the woman who desires to alter her natural appearance pronounces condemnation on herself; and her eager endeavors to please another prove that she has first been displeasing to herself. And what testimony to thine ugliness can we find, O woman, that is more unquestionable than thine own, when thou art afraid to show thyself? If thou art comely why dost thou hide thy comeliness? If thou art plain, why dost thou lyingly pretend to be beautiful, when thou canst not enjoy the pleasure of the lie either in thine own consciousness or in that of another? For he loves another woman, thou desirest to please another man; and thou art angry if he love another, though he is taught adultery in thee. Thou art the evil promptress of thine own injury. For even the woman who has been the victim of a pander shrinks from acting the pander’s part, and though she be vile, it is herself she sins against and not another. The crime of adultery is almost more tolerable than thine; for adultery tampers with modesty, but thou with nature.” It is sufficiently clear, I think, that this eloquence calls passionately upon women to avoid tampering with their appearance by deceitful arts, and to cultivate modesty and fear. Accordingly, we notice that the style is neither subdued nor temperate, but majestic throughout. Now in these two authors whom I have selected as specimens of the rest, and in other ecclesiastical writers who both speak the truth and speak it well,—speak it, that is, judiciously, pointedly, and with beauty and power of expression,—many examples may be found of the three styles of speech,

scattered through their various writings and discourses; and the diligent student may by assiduous reading, intermingled with practice on his own part, become thoroughly imbued with them all.

## CHAPTER 22

### THE NECESSITY OF VARIETY IN STYLE

51. But we are not to suppose that it is against rule to mingle these various styles: on the contrary, every variety of style should be introduced so far as is consistent with good taste. For when we keep monotonously to one style, we fail to retain the hearer's attention; but when we pass from one style to another, the discourse goes off more gracefully, even though it extend to greater length. Each separate style, again, has varieties of its own which prevent the hearer's attention from cooling or becoming languid. We can bear the subdued style, however, longer without variety than the majestic style. For the mental emotion which it is necessary to stir up in order to carry the hearer's feelings with us, when once it has been sufficiently excited, the higher the pitch to which it is raised, can be maintained the shorter time. And therefore we must be on our guard, lest, in striving to carry to a higher point the emotion we have excited, we rather lose what we have already gained. But after the interposition of matter that we have to treat in a quieter style, we can return with good effect to that which must be treated forcibly, thus making the tide of eloquence to ebb and flow like the sea. It follows from this, that the majestic style, if it is to be long continued, ought not to be unvaried, but should alternate at intervals with the other styles; the speech or writing as a whole, however, being referred to that style which is the prevailing one.

## CHAPTER 23

### HOW THE VARIOUS STYLES SHOULD BE MINGLED

52. Now it is a matter of importance to determine what style should be alternated with what other, and the places where it is necessary that any particular style should be used. In the majestic style, for instance, it is always, or almost always, desirable that the introduction should be temperate. And the speaker has it in his discretion to use the subdued style

even where the majestic would be allowable, in order that the majestic when it is used may be the more majestic by comparison, and may as it were shine out with greater brilliance from the dark background. Again, whatever may be the style of the speech or writing, when knotty questions turn up for solution, accuracy of distinction is required, and this naturally demands the subdued style. And accordingly this style must be used in alternation with the other two styles whenever questions of that sort turn up; just as we must use the temperate style, no matter what may be the general tone of the discourse, whenever praise or blame is to be given without any ulterior reference to the condemnation or acquittal of any one, or to obtaining the concurrence of any one in a course of action. In the majestic style, then, and in the quiet likewise, both the other two styles occasionally find place. The temperate style, on the other hand, not indeed always, but occasionally, needs the quiet style; for example, when, as I have said, a knotty question comes up to be settled, or when some points that are susceptible of ornament are left unadorned and expressed in the quiet style, in order to give greater effect to certain exuberances (as they may be called) of ornament. But the temperate style never needs the aid of the majestic; for its object is to gratify, never to excite, the mind.

## CHAPTER 24

### THE EFFECTS PRODUCED BY THE MAJESTIC STYLE

53. If frequent and vehement applause follows a speaker, we are not to suppose on that account that he is speaking in the majestic style; for this effect is often produced both by the accurate distinctions of the quiet style, and by the beauties of the temperate. The majestic style, on the other hand, frequently silences the audience by its impressiveness, but calls forth their tears. For example, when at Caesarea in Mauritania I was dissuading the people from that civil, or worse than civil, war which they called Caterva (for it was not fellow-citizens merely, but neighbors, brothers, fathers and sons even, who, divided into two factions and armed with stones, fought annually at a certain season of the year for several days continuously, every one killing whomsoever he could), I strove with all the vehemence of speech that I could command to root out and drive from their hearts and lives an evil so cruel and inveterate; it was not, however, when I heard their

applause, but when I saw their tears, that I thought I had produced an effect. For the applause showed that they were instructed and delighted, but the tears that they were subdued. And when I saw their tears I was confident even before the event proved it, that this horrible and barbarous custom (which had been handed down to them from their fathers and their ancestors of generations long gone by and which like an enemy was besieging their hearts, or rather had complete possession of them) was overthrown; and immediately that my sermon was finished I called upon them with heart and voice to give praise and thanks to God. And, lo, with the blessing of Christ, it is now eight years or more since anything of the sort was attempted there. In many other cases besides I have observed that men show the effect made on them by the powerful eloquence of a wise man, not by clamorous applause so much as by groans, sometimes even by tears, finally by change of life.

54. The quiet style, too, has made a change in many; but it was to teach them what they were ignorant of, or to persuade them of what they thought incredible, not to make them do what they knew they ought to do but were unwilling to do. To break down hardness of this sort, speech needs to be vehement. Praise and censure, too, when they are eloquently expressed, even in the temperate style, produce such an effect on some, that they are not only pleased with the eloquence of the encomiums and censures, but are led to live so as themselves to deserve praise, and to avoid living so as to incur blame. But no one would say that all who are thus delighted change their habits in consequence, whereas all who are moved by the majestic style act accordingly, and all who are taught by the quiet style know or believe a truth which they were previously ignorant of.

## CHAPTER 25

### HOW THE TEMPERATE STYLE IS TO BE USED

55. From all this we may conclude, that the end arrived at by the two styles last mentioned is the one which it is most essential for those who aspire to speak with wisdom and eloquence to secure. On the other hand, what the temperate style properly aims at, viz., to please by beauty of expression, is not in itself an adequate end; but when what we have to say is good and

useful, and when the hearers are both acquainted with it and favorably disposed towards it, so that it is not necessary either to instruct or persuade them, beauty of style may have its influence in securing their prompt compliance, or in making them adhere to it more tenaciously. For as the function of all eloquence, whichever of these three forms it may assume, is to speak persuasively, and its object is to persuade, an eloquent man will speak persuasively, whatever style he may adopt; but unless he succeeds in persuading, his eloquence has not secured its object. Now in the subdued style, he persuades his hearers that what he says is true; in the majestic style, he persuades them to do what they are aware they ought to do, but do not; in the temperate style, he persuades them that his speech is elegant and ornate. But what use is there in attaining such an object as this last? They may desire it who are vain of their eloquence and make a boast of panegyrics, and such-like performances, where the object is not to instruct the hearer, or to persuade him to any course of action, but merely to give him pleasure. We, however, ought to make that end subordinate to another, viz., the effecting by this style of eloquence what we aim at effecting when we use the majestic style. For we may by the use of this style persuade men to cultivate good habits and give up evil ones, if they are not so hardened as to need the vehement style; or if they have already begun a good course, we may induce them to pursue it more zealously, and to persevere in it with constancy. Accordingly, even in the temperate style we must use beauty of expression not for ostentation, but for wise ends; not contenting ourselves merely with pleasing the hearer, but rather seeking to aid him in the pursuit of the good end which we hold out before him.

## CHAPTER 26

### IN EVERY STYLE THE ORATOR SHOULD AIM AT PERSPICUITY, BEAUTY, AND PERSUASIVENESS

55. Now in regard to the three conditions I laid down a little while ago as necessary to be fulfilled by any one who wishes to speak with wisdom and eloquence, viz., perspicuity, beauty of style, and persuasive power, we are not to understand that these three qualities attach themselves respectively to the three several styles of speech, one to each, so that perspicuity is a merit peculiar to the subdued style, beauty to the temperate, and persuasive power



to the majestic. On the contrary, all speech, whatever its style, ought constantly to aim at, and as far as possible to display, all these three merits. For we do not like even what we say in the subdued style to pall upon the hearer; and therefore we would be listened to, not with intelligence merely, but with pleasure as well. Again, why do we enforce what we teach by divine testimony, except that we wish to carry the hearer with us, that is, to compel his assent by calling in the assistance of Him of whom it is said, "Thy testimonies are very sure"? And when any one narrates a story, even in the subdued style, what does he wish but to be believed? But who will listen to him if he do not arrest attention by some beauty of style? And if he be not intelligible, is it not plain that he can neither give pleasure nor enforce conviction? The subdued style, again, in its own naked simplicity, when it unravels questions of very great difficulty, and throws an unexpected light upon them; when it worms out and brings to light some very acute observations from a quarter whence nothing was expected; when it seizes upon and exposes the falsity of an opposing opinion, which seemed at its first statement to be unassailable; especially when all this is accompanied by a natural, unsought grace of expression, and by a rhythm and balance of style which is not ostentatiously obtruded, but seems rather to be called forth by the nature of the subject: this style, so used, frequently calls forth applause so great that one can hardly believe it to be the subdued style. For the fact that it comes forth without either ornament or defense, and offers battle in its own naked simplicity, does not hinder it from crushing its adversary by weight of nerve and muscle, and overwhelming and destroying the falsehood that opposes it by the mere strength of its own right arm. How explain the frequent and vehement applause that waits upon men who speak thus, except by the pleasure that truth so irresistibly established, and so victoriously defended, naturally affords? Wherefore the Christian teacher and speaker ought, when he uses the subdued style, to endeavor not only to be clear and intelligible, but to give pleasure and to bring home conviction to the hearer.

57. Eloquence of the temperate style, also, must, in the case of the Christian orator, be neither altogether without ornament, nor unsuitably adorned, nor is it to make the giving of pleasure its sole aim, which is all it professes to accomplish in the hands of others; but in its encomiums and censures it

should aim at inducing the hearer to strive after or avoid or renounce what it condemns. On the other hand, without perspicuity this style cannot give pleasure. And so the three qualities, perspicuity, beauty, and persuasiveness, are to be sought in this style also; beauty, of course, being its primary object.

58. Again, when it becomes necessary to stir and sway the hearer's mind by the majestic style (and this is always necessary when he admits that what you say is both true and agreeable, and yet is unwilling to act accordingly), you must, of course, speak in the majestic style. But who can be moved if he does not understand what is said? and who will stay to listen if he receives no pleasure? Wherefore, in this style, too, when an obdurate heart is to be persuaded to obedience, you must speak so as to be both intelligible and pleasing, if you would be heard with a submissive mind.

## CHAPTER 27

### THE MAN WHOSE LIFE IS IN HARMONY WITH HIS TEACHING WILL TEACH WITH GREATER EFFECT

59. But whatever may be the majesty of the style, the life of the speaker will count for more in securing the hearer's compliance. The man who speaks wisely and eloquently, but lives wickedly, may, it is true, instruct many who are anxious to learn; though, as it is written, he "is unprofitable to himself." Wherefore, also, the apostle says: "Whether in pretence or in truth Christ is preached." Now Christ is the truth; yet we see that the truth can be preached, though not in truth,—that is, what is right and true in itself may be preached by a man of perverse and deceitful mind. And thus it is that Jesus Christ is preached by those that seek their own, and not the things that are Jesus Christ's. But since true believers obey the voice, not of any man, but of the Lord Himself, who says, "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not;" therefore it is that men who themselves lead unprofitable lives are heard with profit by others. For though they seek their own objects, they do not dare to teach their own doctrines, sitting as they do in the high places of ecclesiastical authority, which is established on sound doctrine. Wherefore our Lord Himself, before saying what I have just

quoted about men of this stamp, made this observation: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat." The seat they occupied, then, which was not theirs but Moses,' compelled them to say what was good, though they did what was evil. And so they followed their own course in their lives, but were prevented by the seat they occupied, which belonged to another, from preaching their own doctrines.

60. Now these men do good to many by preaching what they themselves do not perform; but they would do good to very many more if they lived as they preach. For there are numbers who seek an excuse for their own evil lives in comparing the teaching with the conduct of their instructors, and who say in their hearts, or even go a little further, and say with their lips: Why do you not do yourself what you bid me do? And thus they cease to listen with submission to a man who does not listen to himself, and in despising the preacher they learn to despise the word that is preached. Wherefore the apostle, writing to Timothy, after telling him, "Let no man despise thy youth," adds immediately the course by which he would avoid contempt: "but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

## CHAPTER 28

TRUTH IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EXPRESSION. WHAT IS MEANT BY STRIFE ABOUT WORDS

61. Such a teacher as is here described may, to secure compliance, speak not only quietly and temperately, but even vehemently, without any breach of modesty, because his life protects him against contempt. For while he pursues an upright life, he takes care to maintain a good reputation as well, providing things honest in the sight of God and men, fearing God, and caring for men. In his very speech even he prefers to please by matter rather than by words; thinks that a thing is well said in proportion as it is true in fact, and that a teacher should govern his words, not let the words govern him. This is what the apostle says: "Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." To the same effect also is what he says to Timothy: "Charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers." Now this

does not mean that, when adversaries oppose the truth, we are to say nothing in defence of the truth. For where, then, would be what he says when he is describing the sort of man a bishop ought to be: “that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers?” To strive about words is not to be careful about the way to overcome error by truth, but to be anxious that your mode of expression should be preferred to that of another. The man who does not strive about words, whether he speak quietly, temperately, or vehemently, uses words with no other purpose than to make the truth plain, pleasing, and effective; for not even love itself, which is the end of the commandment and the fulfilling of the law, can be rightly exercised unless the objects of love are true and not false. For as a man with a comely body but an ill-conditioned mind is a more painful object than if his body too were deformed, so men who teach lies are the more pitiable if they happen to be eloquent in speech. To speak eloquently, then, and wisely as well, is just to express truths which it is expedient to teach in fit and proper words,—words which in the subdued style are adequate, in the temperate, elegant, and in the majestic, forcible. But the man who cannot speak both eloquently and wisely should speak wisely without eloquence, rather than eloquently without wisdom.

## CHAPTER 29

IT IS PERMISSIBLE FOR A PREACHER TO DELIVER TO THE PEOPLE WHAT HAS BEEN WRITTEN BY A MORE ELOQUENT MAN THAN HIMSELF

If, however, he cannot do even this, let his life be such as shall not only secure a reward for himself, but afford an example to others; and let his manner of living be an eloquent sermon in itself.

63. There are, indeed, some men who have a good delivery, but cannot compose anything to deliver. Now, if such men take what has been written with wisdom and eloquence by others, and commit it to memory, and deliver it to the people, they cannot be blamed, supposing them to do it without deception. For in this way many become preachers of the truth (which is certainly desirable), and yet not many teachers; for all deliver the discourse which one real teacher has composed, and there are no divisions among them. Nor are such men to be alarmed by the words of Jeremiah the

prophet, through whom God denounces those who steal His words every one from his neighbor. For those who steal take what does not belong to them, but the word of God belongs to all who obey it; and it is the man who speaks well, but lives badly, who really takes the words that belong to another. For the good things he says seem to be the result of his own thought, and yet they have nothing in common with his manner of life. And so God has said that they steal His words who would appear good by speaking God's words, but are in fact bad, as they follow their own ways. And if you look closely into the matter, it is not really themselves who say the good things they say. For how can they say in words what they deny in deeds? It is not for nothing that the apostle says of such men: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him." In one sense, then, they do say the things, and in another sense they do not say them; for both these statements must be true, both being made by Him who is the Truth. Speaking of such men, in one place He says, "Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works;"—that is to say, what ye hear from their lips, that do; what ye see in their lives, that do ye not;—"for they say and do not." And so, though they do not, yet they say. But in another place, upbraiding such men, He says, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?" And from this it would appear that even what they say, when they say what is good, it is not themselves who say, for in will and in deed they deny what they say. Hence it happens that a wicked man who is eloquent may compose a discourse in which the truth is set forth to be delivered by a good man who is not eloquent; and when this takes place, the former draws from himself what does not belong to him, and the latter receives from another what really belongs to himself. But when true believers render this service to true believers, both parties speak what is their own, for God is theirs, to whom belongs all that they say; and even those who could not compose what they say make it their own by composing their lives in harmony with it.

## CHAPTER 30

### THE PREACHER SHOULD COMMENCE HIS DISCOURSE WITH PRAYER TO GOD

63. But whether a man is going to address the people or to dictate what others will deliver or read to the people, he ought to pray God to put into his

mouth a suitable discourse. For if Queen Esther prayed, when she was about to speak to the king touching the temporal welfare of her race, that God would put fit words into her mouth, how much more ought he to pray for the same blessing who labors in word and doctrine for the eternal welfare of men? Those, again, who are to deliver what others compose for them ought, before they receive their discourse, to pray for those who are preparing it; and when they have received it, they ought to pray both that they themselves may deliver it well, and that those to whom they address it may give ear; and when the discourse has a happy issue, they ought to render thanks to Him from whom they know such blessings come, so that all the praise may be His “in whose hand are both we and our words.”

#### CHAPTER 31

##### APOLOGY FOR THE LENGTH OF THE WORK

64. This book has extended to a greater length than I expected or desired. But the reader or hearer who finds pleasure in it will not think it long. He who thinks it long, but is anxious to know its contents, may read it in part. He who does not care to be acquainted with it need not complain of its length. I, however, give thanks to God that with what little ability I possess I have in these four books striven to depict, not the sort of man I am myself (for my defects are very many), but the sort of man he ought to be who desires to labor in sound, that is, in Christian doctrine, not for his own instruction only, but for that of others also.

# ON CONTINENCE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

DE CONTINENTIA.

TRANSLATED BY REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

ST. Augustin speaks of his work *On Continence* in Ep. 231, *Ad Darium Comitem*. [See vol. 1. of this edition, p. 584.—P.S.] Possidius, *Ind.* c. 10, mentions it, and it is cited in the *Collectanea* of Bede or Florus, and by Eugypius. Erasmus is therefore wrong in ascribing it to Hugo on the ground of the style, which is not unlike that of the earlier discourses. It is evidently a discourse, and probably for that reason unnoticed in the *Retractations*. The Manichaean heresy is impugned after the manner of his early works.—(Abridged from Benedictine ed. vol. vi.)

1. It is difficult to treat of the virtue of the soul, which is called Continence, in a manner fully suitable and worthy; but He, whose great gift this virtue is, will help our littleness under the burden of so great a weight. For He, who bestows it upon His faithful ones when they are continent, Himself gives discourse of it to His ministers when they speak. Lastly, of so great a matter purposing to speak what Himself shall grant, in the first place we say and prove that Continence is the gift of God. We have it written in the *Book of Wisdom*, that no one can be continent, unless God grant it. But the Lord, concerning that greater and more glorious Continence itself, whereby there is continence from the marriage bond, says, “Not all can receive this saying, but they to whom it is given.” And since marriage chastity also itself cannot be guarded, unless there be Continence from unlawful intercourse, the Apostle declared both to be the gift of God, when He spake of both lives, that is, both that of marriage and that without marriage, saying, “I would

that all men were so as myself; but each hath his own gift from God; one in this manner, another in that manner.”

2. And lest it should seem that necessary Continence was to be hoped for from the Lord only in respect of the lust of the lower parts of the flesh, it is also sung in the Psalm; “Set, O Lord, a watch to my mouth, and a door of Continence around my lips.” But in this witness of the divine speech, if we understand “mouth” as we ought to understand it, we perceive how great a gift of God Continence there set is. Forsooth it is little to contain the mouth of the body, lest any thing burst forth thence, which is not for the better, through the sound of the voice. For there is, within, the mouth of the heart, where he, who spake these words, and wrote them for us to speak, desired of the Lord that the watch and door of Continence should be set for him. For many things we say not with the mouth of the body, and cry aloud with the heart: but there goes forth from the mouth of the body no word of any thing, whereof there is silence in the heart. Therefore what flows not forth thence, sounds not abroad: but what flows forth thence, if it be evil, although it move not the tongue, defiles the soul. Therefore Continence must be set there, where the conscience even of them who are silent speaks. For it is brought to pass by means of the door of Continence, that there go not forth thence that, which, even when the lips of the flesh are closed, pollutes the life of him that hath the thought.

3. Lastly, to show more plainly the inner mouth, which by these words he meant, after having said, “Set a watch, O Lord, to my mouth, and a door of Continence around my lips,” he added straightway, “Cause not my heart to fall aside into evil words.” The falling aside of the heart, what is it but the consent? For he hath not yet spoken, whosoever in his heart hath with no falling aside of the heart consented unto suggestions that meet him of each several thing that is seen. But, if he hath consented, he hath already spoken in his heart, although he hath not uttered sound by the mouth; although he hath not done with hand or any part whatever of the body, yet hath he done what in his thought he hath already determined that he is to do: guilty by the divine laws, although hidden to human senses; the word having been spoken in the heart, no deed having been committed through the body. But in no case would he have moved the limb without, in a deed, the beginning



of which deed had not gone before within in word. For it is no lie that is written, that “the beginning of every work is a word.” Forsooth men do many things with mouth closed, tongue quiet, voice bridled; but yet they do nothing by work of the body, which they have not before spoken in the heart. And through this since there are many sins in inward sayings which are not in outward deeds, whereas there are none in outward deeds, which do not go before in inward sayings, there will be purity of innocence from both, if the door of Continence be set around the inward lips.

4. For which cause our Lord Himself also with His own mouth saith, “Cleanse what are within, and what are without will be clean.” And, also, in another place, when He was refuting the foolish speeches of the Jews, in that they spake evil against His disciples, eating with unwashen hands; “Not what entereth into the mouth,” said He, “defileth the man: but what cometh forth out of the mouth, that defileth the man.” Which sentence, if the whole of it be taken of the mouth of the body, is absurd. For neither doth vomit defile him, whom food defileth not. Forsooth food entereth into the mouth, vomit proceedeth forth out of the mouth. But without doubt the former words relate to the mouth of the flesh, where He says, “Not what entereth into the mouth defileth the man,” but the latter words to the mouth of the heart, where He saith, “But what proceedeth forth out of the mouth, this defileth the man.” Lastly, when the Apostle Peter sought of Him an explanation of this as of a parable, He answered, “Are ye also yet without understanding? understand ye not, that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?” Here surely we perceive the mouth of the flesh, into which the food enters. But in what He next adds, in order that we might recognize the mouth of the heart, the slowness of our heart would not follow, did not the Truth deign to walk even with the slow. For He saith, “But what things go forth from the mouth, go out of the heart;” as though He should say, When you hear it said “from the mouth,” understand “from the heart.” I say both, but I set forth one by the other. The inner man hath an inner mouth, and this the inner ear discerns: what things go forth from this mouth, go out of the heart, and they defile the man. Then having left the term mouth, which may be understood also of the body, He shows more openly what He is saying. “For from the heart go out,” saith He, “evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications,

thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are what defile the man.” There is surely no one of those evils, which can be committed also by the members of the body, but that the evil thoughts go before and defile the man, although something hinder the sinful and wicked deeds of the body from following. For if, because power is not given, the hand is free from the murder of a man, is the heart of the murderer forsooth therefore clean from sin? Or if she be chaste, whom one unchaste wishes to commit adultery with, hath he on that account failed to commit adultery with her in his heart? Or if the harlot be not found in the brothel, doth he, who seeks her, on that account fail to commit fornication in his heart? Or if time and place be wanting to one who wishes to hurt his neighbor by a lie, hath he on that account failed already to speak false witness with his inner mouth? Or if any one fearing men, dare not utter aloud blasphemy with tongue of flesh, is he on this account guiltless of this crime, who saith in his heart, “There is no God.” Thus all the other evil deeds of men, which no motion of the body performs, of which no sense of the body is conscious, have their own secret criminals, who are also polluted by consent alone in thought, that is, by evil words of the inner mouth. Into which he (the Psalmist) fearing lest his heart should fall aside, asks of the Lord that the door of Continence be set around the lips of this mouth, to contain the heart, that it fall not aside into evil words: but contain it, by not suffering thought to proceed to consent: for thus, according to the precept of the Apostle, sin reigneth not in our mortal body, nor do we yield our members as weapons of unrighteousness unto sin. From fulfilling which precept they are surely far removed, who on this account turn not their members to sin, because no power is allowed them; and if this be present, straightway by the motions of their members, as of weapons, they show, who reigneth in them within. Wherefore so far as is in themselves, they yield their members weapons of unrighteousness unto sin; because this is what they wish, which for this reason they yield not, because they are not able.

5. And on this account that, which, the parts that beget being bridled by modesty, is most chiefly and properly to be called Continence, is violated by no transgression, if the higher Continence, concerning which we have been some time speaking, be preserved in the heart. For this reason the Lord, after He had said, “For from the heart go forth evil thoughts,” then

went on to add what it is that belongs to evil thoughts, “murders, adulteries,” and the rest. He spake not of all; but, having named certain by way of instance, He taught that we are to understand others also. Of which there is no one that can take place, unless an evil thought have gone before, whereby that is prepared within which is done without, and going forth out of the mouth of the heart already defiles the man, although, through no power being granted, it be not done without by means of the members of the body. When therefore a door of Continence hath been set in the mouth of the heart, whence go out all that defile the man, if nothing such be permitted to go out thence, there followeth a purity, wherein now the conscience may rejoice; although there be not as yet that perfection, wherein Continence shall not strive with vice. But now, so long as “the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh,” it is enough for us not to consent unto the evils which we feel in us. But, when that consent takes place, then there goeth out of the mouth of the heart what defileth the man. But when through Continence consent is withheld, the evil of the lust of the flesh, against which the lust of the spirit fights, is not suffered to harm.

6. But it is one thing to fight well, which now is, when the strife of death is resisted; another thing not to have an adversary, which will then be, when death, “the last enemy,” shall be destroyed. For Continence also itself, when it curbs and restrains lusts, at once both seeks the good unto the immortality of which we aim, and rejects the evil with which in this mortality we contend. Of the one it is forsooth the lover and beholder, but of the other both the enemy and witness: both seeking what becomes, and fleeing what misbecomes. Assuredly Continence would not labor in curbing lusts, if we had no wishes contrary to what is becoming, if there were no opposition on the part of evil lust unto our good will. The Apostle cries aloud, “I know,” saith he, “that there dwelleth not in me, that is in my flesh, good. For to will lieth near to me, but to accomplish good I find not.” For now good can be done, so far as that there be no assent given unto evil lust: but good will be accomplished, when the evil lust itself shall come to an end. And also the same teacher of the Gentiles cries aloud, “I take pleasure together with the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind.”

7. This conflict none experience in themselves, save such as war on the side of the virtues, and war down the vices: nor doth any thing storm the evil of lust, save the good of Continence. But there are, who, being utterly ignorant of the law of God, account not evil lusts among their enemies, and through wretched blindness being slaves to them, over and above think themselves also blessed, by satisfying them rather than taming them. But whoso through the Law have come to know them, (“For through the Law is the knowledge of sin,” and, “Lust,” saith he, “I knew not, unless the Law should say, Thou shalt not lust after,” and yet are overcome by their assault, because they live under the Law, whereby what is good is commanded, but not also given: they live not under Grace, which gives through the Holy Spirit what is commanded through the Law: unto these the Law therefore entered, that in them the offense might abound. The prohibition increased the lust, and made it unconquered: that there might be transgression also, which without the Law was not, although there was sin, “For where there is not Law, neither is there transgression.” Thus the Law, Grace not helping, forbidding sin, became over and above the strength of sin; whence the Apostle saith, “The Law is the strength of sin.” Nor is it to be wondered at, that man’s weakness even from the good Law added strength to evil, whilst it trusts to fulfill the Law itself of its own strength. Forsooth being ignorant of the righteousness of God, which He gives unto the weak, and wishing to establish his own, of which the weak is void, he was not made subject to the righteousness of God, reprobate and proud. But if the Law, as a schoolmaster, lead unto Grace one made an offender, as though for this purpose more grievously wounded, that he may desire a Physician; against the baneful sweetness, whereby lust prevailed, the Lord gives a sweetness that worketh good, that by it Continence may the more delight, and “our land giveth her fruit,” whereby the soldier is fed, who by the help of the Lord wars down sin.

8. Such soldiers the Apostolic trumpet enkindles for battle with that sound, “Therefore let not,” saith he, “sin reign in your mortal body to obey its lusts; nor yield your members weapons of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as living in place of dead, and your members weapons of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not rule over you. For ye are not under the law, but under Grace.” And in another place, “Therefore,”

saith he, “brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye shall live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” This therefore is the business in hand, so long as this our mortal life under Grace lasts, that sin, that is the lust of sin, (for this he in this place calls by the name of sin,) reign not in this our mortal body. But it is then shown to reign, if obedience be yielded to its desires. There is therefore in us lust of sin, which must not be suffered to reign; there are its desires, which we must not obey, lest obeying it reign over us. Wherefore let not lust usurp our members, but let Continence claim them for herself; that they be weapons of righteousness unto God, that they be not weapons of unrighteousness unto sin; for thus sin shall not rule over us. For we are not under the Law, which indeed commandeth what is good yet giveth it not: but we are under Grace, which, making us to love that which the Law commands, is able to rule over the free.

9. And also, when he exhorts us, that we live not after the flesh, lest we die, but that by the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the flesh, that we may live; surely the trumpet which sounds, shows the war in which we are engaged, and enkindles us to contend keenly, and to do our enemies to death, that we be not done to death by them. But who those enemies are, it hath set forth plainly enough. For those are they, whom it willed should be done to death by us, that is to say, the works of the flesh. For so it saith, “But if by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.” And in order that we may know what these are, let us hear the same in like manner writing unto the Galatians, and saying, “But the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, fornications, uncleannesses, luxuries, idolatry, witchcrafts, hatreds, contentions, emulations, wraths, strifes, heresies, envyings, drunkennesses, revellings, and such like; of which I foretell to you, as I have foretold, that they who do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God.” For the very war there also was he showing, that he should speak of these, and unto the death-doing of these enemies was he calling up the soldiers of Christ by the same heavenly and spiritual trumpet. For he had said above, “But I say, walk in the Spirit, and perform ye not the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. For these are opposed one to the other, that ye do not what

ye would. But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.” Therefore being set under Grace, he would have them have that conflict against the works of the flesh. And in order to point out these works of the flesh, he added what I have mentioned above. “But the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, fornications,” and the rest, whether what he mentioned, or whether what he admonished were to be understood, chiefly as he added, “and such like.” Lastly, in this battle, against what is in a manner the carnal army leading forth as it were another spiritual line, “But the fruit of the Spirit is,” saith he, “charity, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, continence; against such there is no law.” He saith not “against these,” lest they should be thought to be alone: although even were he to say this, we ought to understand all, whatever goods of the same kind we could think of: but he saith, “against such,” that is to say, both these and whatsoever are such like. However, in that among the goods of which he made mention, he set Continence in the last place, (concerning which we have now undertaken to treat, and on account of which we have already said much,) he willed that it should in an especial manner cleave to our minds. Forsooth this same is of great avail in this case, wherein the Spirit lusteth against the flesh; forasmuch as in a certain way it crucifies the lusts of the flesh. Whence, after the Apostle had thus spoken, he added straightway, “But they who are Jesus Christ’s have crucified their own flesh, with the passions and lusts.” This is the acting of Continence: thus the works of the flesh are done to death. But they do to death those, whom falling away from Continence lust draweth into consent to do such works.

10. But in order that we fall not away from Continence, we ought to watch specially against those snares of the suggestions of the devil, that we presume not of our own strength. For, “Cursed is every one that setteth his hope in man.” And who is he, but man? We cannot therefore truly say that he setteth not his hope in man, who setteth it in himself. For this also, to “live after man,” what is it but to “live after the flesh?” Whoso therefore is tempted by such a suggestion, let him hear, and, if he have any Christian feeling, let him tremble. Let him hear, I say, “If ye shall live after the flesh, ye shall die.”

11. But some one will say to me that it is one thing to live after man, another thing to live after the flesh; because man forsooth is a rational creature, and there is in him a rational soul, whereby he differs from the beast: but the flesh is the lowest and earthly part of man, and thus to live after it is faulty: and for this reason, he who lives after man, assuredly lives not after the flesh, but rather after that part of man, whereby he is man, that is, after the spirit of the mind whereby he excels the beasts. But this discussion is perhaps of some force in the schools of philosophers: but we, in order to understand the Apostle of Christ, ought to observe in what manner the Christian books are used to speak; at any rate it is the belief of all of us, to whom to live is Christ, that Man was taken unto Himself by the Word of God, not surely without a rational soul, as certain heretics will have it; and yet we read, "The Word was made flesh." What is to be here understood by "flesh," but Man? "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." What can be understood, but all men? "Unto Thee shall all flesh come." What is it, but all men? "Thou hast given unto Him power over all flesh." What is it, but all men? "Of the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified." What is it, but no man shall be justified? And this the same Apostle in another place confessing more plainly saith, "Man shall not be justified of the works of the Law." The Corinthians also he rebukes, saying, "Are ye not carnal, and walk after man?" After he had called them carnal, he saith not, ye walk after the flesh, but after man, forasmuch as by this also what would he have understood, but after the flesh? For surely if to walk, that is, to live, after the flesh deserved blame, but after man deserved praise, he would not say by way of rebuke, "ye walk after man." Let man recognize the reproach; let him change his purpose, let him shun destruction. Hear thou man: walk not thou after man, but after Him Who made man. Fall not thou away from Him Who made thee, even unto thyself. For a man said, who yet lived not after man, "Not that we are sufficient to think any thing from ourselves, as though of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God." Consider if he lived after man, who spake these things with truth. Therefore the Apostle, admonishing man not to live after man, restores man to God. But whoso liveth not after man, but after God, assuredly liveth not even after himself, because himself also is a man. But he is therefore said also to live after the flesh, when he so lives; because also when the flesh alone hath been named, man is understood, as we have

already shown: just as when the soul alone hath been named, man is understood: whence it is said, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers," that is, every man; and, "Seventy-five souls went down into Egypt with Jacob," that is, seventy-five men. Therefore live thou not after thyself, O man: thou hadst thence perished, but thou wast sought. Live not then, I say, after thyself, O man; thou hadst thence perished, but thou wast found. Accuse not thou the nature of the flesh, when you hear it said, "If ye shall live after the flesh, ye shall die." For thus could it be said, and most truly could it, If ye shall live after yourselves ye shall die. For the devil hath not flesh, and yet, because he would live after himself, "he abode not in the truth." What wonder therefore, if, living after himself, "when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own," which the Truth spake truly of him.

12. When, therefore, you hear it said, "Sin shall not reign over you;" have not thou confidence of thyself, that sin reign not over thee, but of Him, unto Whom a certain Saint saith in prayer, "Direct my paths after Thy Word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me." For lest haply, after that we had heard, "sin shall not reign over you," we should lift up ourselves, and lay this to our own strength, straightway the Apostle saw this, and added, "For ye are not under the Law, but under Grace." Therefore, Grace causeth that sin reign not over you. Do not thou, therefore, have confidence of thyself, lest it thence reign much more over thee. And, when we hear it said, "If by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live," let us not lay this so great good unto our own spirit, as though of itself it can do this. For, in order that we should not entertain that carnal sense, the spirit being dead rather than that which putteth others to death, straightway he added, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." Therefore that by our spirit we may mortify the works of the flesh, we are led by the Spirit of God, Who gives Continence, whereby to curb, tame, overcome lust.

13. In this so great conflict, wherein man under Grace lives, and when, being aided, he fights well, rejoices in the Lord with trembling, there yet are not wanting even to valiant warriors, and mortifiers however unconquered of the works of the flesh, some wounds of sins, for the healing of which they may say daily, "Forgive us our debts:" against the same vices, and against the devil the prince and king of vices, striving with much greater



watchfulness and keenness by the very prayer, that his deadly suggestions avail not aught, whereby he further urges the sinner to excuse rather than accuse his own sins; and thus those wounds not only be not healed, but also, although they were not deadly, yet may be pressed home to grievous and fatal harm. And here therefore there is need of a more cautious Contenance, whereby to restrain the proud appetite of man; whereby he is self-pleased, and unwilling to be found worthy of blame, and disdains, when he sins, to be convicted that he himself has sinned; not with healthful humility taking upon him to accuse himself, but rather with fatal arrogance seeking to find an excuse. In order to restrain this pride, he, whose words I have already set down above, and, as I could, commended, sought Contenance from the Lord. For, after that he had said, "Set, O Lord, a watch to my mouth, and a door of Contenance around my lips. Make not my heart to fall aside unto evil words;" explaining more clearly whereof he spake this, he saith, "to make excuses in sins." For what more evil than these words, whereby the evil man denies that he is evil, although convicted of an evil work, which he cannot deny. And since he cannot hide the deed, or say that it is well done, and still sees that it is clear that it was done by him, he seeks to refer to another what he hath done, as though he could remove thence what he hath deserved. Being unwilling that himself be guilty, he rather adds to his guilt, and by excusing, not accusing, his own sins, he knows not that he is putting from him, not punishment, but pardon. For before human judges, forasmuch as they may be deceived, it seems to profit somewhat for the time, to cleanse as it were what hath been done amiss by any deceit whatever; but before God, Who cannot be deceived, we are to use, not a deceitful defense, but a true confession of sins.

14. And some indeed, who are used to excuse their own sins, complain that they are driven to sin by fate, as though the stars had decreed this, and heaven had first sinned by decreeing such, in order that man should after sin by committing such, and thus had rather impute their sin to fortune: who think that all things are driven to and fro by chance accidents, and yet contend that this their wisdom and assertion is not of chance rashness, but of ascertained reason. What madness then is it, to lay to reason their discussions, and to make their actions subject to accidents! Others refer to the devil the whole of what they do ill: and will not have even a share with

him, whereas they may suspect whether he by hidden suggestions hath persuaded them to evil, and on the other hand cannot doubt that they have consented to those suggestions, from whatever source they have come. There are also they who extend their defense of self unto an accusation of God, wretched by the divine judgment, but blasphemers by their own madness. For against Him they bring in from a contrary principle a substance of evil rebelling, which He could not have resisted, had He not blended with that same that was rebelling a portion of His own Substance and Nature, for it to contaminate and corrupt; and they say that they then sin when the nature of evil prevails over the nature of God. This is that most unclean madness of the Manichaeans, whose devilish devices the undoubted truth most easily overthrows; which confesses that the nature of God is incapable of contamination and corruption. But what wicked contamination and corruption do they not deserve to have believed of them, by whom God, Who is good in the very highest degree, and in a way that admits not of comparison, is believed to be capable of contamination and corruption?

15. And there are also they who in excuse of their sins so accuse God, as to say that sins are pleasing to Him. For, if they were displeasing, say they, surely by His most Almighty power He would by no means suffer them to take place. As though indeed God suffered sins to be unpunished, even in the case of those whom by remission of sins He frees from eternal punishment! No one forsooth receives pardon of more grievous punishment due, unless he hath suffered some punishment, be it what it may, although far less than what was due: and the fullness of mercy is so conveyed, as that the justice also of discipline is not abandoned. For also sin, which seems unavenged, hath its own attendant punishment, so that there is no one but by reason of what he hath done either suffers pain from bitterness, or suffers not through blindness. As therefore you say, Why doth He permit those things, if they are displeasing? so I say, Why doth He punish them, if they are pleasing? And thus, as I confess that those things would not take place at all, unless they were permitted by the Almighty, so confess thou that what are punished by the Just One ought not to be done; in order that, by not doing what He punishes, we may deserve to learn of Him, why He permits to exist what He punishes. For, as it is written, “solid food is for the

perfect,” wherein they who have made good progress already understand, that it pertained rather unto the Almighty power of God, to allow the existence of evils coming from the free choice of the will. So great forsooth is His Almighty goodness, as that even of evil He can make good, either by pardoning, or by healing, or by fitting and turning unto the profit of the pious, or even by most justly taking vengeance. For all these are good, and most worthy a good and Almighty God: and yet they are not made save of evils. What therefore better, what more Almighty, than He, Who, whereas He maketh no evil, even of evils maketh well? They who have done ill cry unto Him, “Forgive us our debts;” He hears, He pardons. Their own evils have hurt the sinners; He helps and heals their sicknesses. The enemies of His people rage; of their rage He makes martyrs. Lastly, also, He condemns those, whom He judges worthy of condemnation; although they suffer their own evils, yet He doeth what is good. For what is just cannot but be good, and assuredly as sin is unjust, so the punishment of sin is just.

16. But God wanted not power to make man such as that he should not be able to sin: but He chose rather to make him such, as that it should lie in his power to sin, if he would; not to sin, if he would not; forbidding the one, enjoining the other; that it might be to him first a good desert not to sin, and after a just reward not to be able to sin. For such also at the last will He makes His Saints, as to be without all power to sin. Such forsooth even now hath He His angels, whom in Him we so love, as to have no fear for any of them, lest by sinning he become a devil. And this we presume not of any just man in this mortal life. But we trust that all will be such in that immortal life. For Almighty God Who worketh good even of our evils, what good will He give, when He shall have set us free from all evils? Much may be said more fully and more subtilely on the good use of evil; but this is not what we have undertaken in our present discourse, and we must avoid in it excess of length.

17. Now therefore let us return to that, wherefore we have said what we have. We have need of Continence, and we know it to be a divine gift, that our heart fall not away unto evil words, to make excuses in sins. But what sin is there but that we have need of Continence, to restrain it from being committed, since it is this very Continence which, in case it have been

committed, restrains it from being defended by wicked pride? Universally therefore we have need of Continence, in order to turn away from evil. But to do good seems to pertain to another virtue, that is, to righteousness. This the sacred Psalm admonishes us, where we read, "Turn away from evil, and do good." But with what end we do this, it adds bye and bye, saying, "Seek peace, and ensue it." For we shall then have perfect peace, when, our nature cleaving inseparably to its Creator, we shall have nothing of ourselves opposed to ourselves. This our Saviour also Himself would have us to understand, so far as seems to me when He said, "Let your loins be girt, and your lamps burning." What is it, to gird the loins? To restrain lusts, which is the work of continence. But to have lamps burning is to shine and glow with good works, which is the work of righteousness. Nor was He here silent with what end we do these things, adding and saying, "And you like unto men waiting for their Lord, when He cometh from the marriage." But, when He shall have come, He will reward us, who have kept ourselves from those things which lust, and have done those things which charity hath bidden us: that we may reign in His perfect and eternal peace, without any strife of evil, and with the highest delight of good.

18. All we therefore, who believe in the Living and True God, Whose Nature, being in the highest sense good and incapable of change, neither doth any evil, nor suffers any evil, from Whom is every good, even that which admits of decrease, and Who admits not at all of decrease in His own Good, Which is Himself, when we hear the Apostle saying, "Walk in the Spirit, and perform ye not the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: For these are opposed one to another, that ye do not what ye would." Far be it from us to believe, what the madness of the Manichees believes, that there are here shown two natures or principles contrary one to another at strife, the one nature of good, the other of evil. Altogether these two are both good; both the Spirit is a good, and the flesh a good: and man, who is composed of both, one ruling, the other obeying, is assuredly a good, but a good capable of change, which yet could not be made save by a Good incapable of change, by Whom was created every good, whether small or great; but how small soever, yet made by What is Great; and how great soever, yet no way to be compared with the greatness of the Maker. But in this nature of man, that is

good, and well formed and ordered by One That is Good, there is now war, since there is not yet health. Let the sickness be healed, there is peace. But that sickness fault hath deserved, not nature hath had. And this fault indeed through the laver of regeneration the grace of God hath already remitted unto the faithful; but under the hands of the same Physician nature as yet striveth with its sickness. But in such a conflict victory will be entire soundness; and that, soundness not for a time, but for ever: wherein not only this sickness is to come to an end, but also none to arise after it. Wherefore the just man addresseth his soul and saith, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His returns: Who becometh propitious to all thy iniquities, Who healeth all thy sicknesses." He becometh propitious to our iniquities, when He pardons sins: He heals sicknesses when He restrains evil desires. He becometh propitious unto iniquities by the grant of forgiveness: He heals sicknesses, by the grant of continence. The one was done in Baptism to persons confessing; the other is done in the strife to persons contending; wherein through His help we are to overcome our disease. Even now the one is done, when we are heard, saying, "Forgive us our debts;" but the other, when we are heard, saying, "Lead us not into temptation. For every one is tempted," saith the Apostle James, "being drawn away and enticed by his own lust." And against this fault there is sought the help of medicine from Him, Who can heal all such sicknesses, not by the removal of a nature that is alien from us, but in the renewal of our own nature. Whence also the above-mentioned Apostle saith not, "Every one is tempted" by lust, but added, "by his own:" that he who hears this may understand, how he ought to cry, "I said, Lord, have mercy upon me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee." For it would not have needed healing, had it not corrupted itself by sinning, so that its own flesh should lust against it, that is, itself should be opposed to itself, on that side, wherein in the flesh it was made sick.

19. For the flesh lusts after nothing save through the soul, but the flesh is said to lust against the spirit, when the soul with fleshly lust wrestles against the spirit. This whole are we: and the flesh itself, which on the departure of the soul dies, the lowest part of us is not put away as what we are to flee from, but is laid aside as what we are to receive again, and, after having received it, never again to leave. But "there is sown an animal body,

there shall rise again a spiritual body.” Then from that time the flesh will not lust after any thing against the spirit, when as itself also shall be called spiritual, forasmuch as not only without any opposition, but also without any need of bodily aliment, it shall be for ever made subject unto the spirit, to be quickened by Christ. Therefore these two things, which are now opposed the one to the other within us, since we exist in both, let us pray and endeavor that they may agree. For we ought not to think the one of them an enemy, but the fault, whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit: and this, when healed, will itself cease to exist, and either substance will be safe, and no strife between either. Let us hear the Apostle; “I know,” saith he, “that there dwelleth not in me, that is, in my flesh, any good.” This certainly he saith; that the fault of the flesh, in a good thing, is not good; and, when this shall have ceased to exist, it will be flesh, but it will not be now corrupted or faulty flesh. And yet that this pertains to our nature the same teacher shows, by saying, first, “I know that there dwelleth not in me,” in order to expound which, he added, “that is, in my flesh, any good.” Therefore he saith that his flesh is himself. It is not then itself that is our enemy: and when its faults are resisted, itself is loved, because itself is cared for; “For no one ever hated his own flesh,” as the Apostle himself saith. And in another place he saith, “So then I myself with the mind serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the Law of sin.” Let them hear that have ears. “So then I myself;” I with the mind, I with the flesh, but “with the mind I serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” How “with the flesh the law of sin?” was it at all by consenting unto fleshly lust? Far be it! but by having there motions of desires which he would not have, and yet had. But, by not consenting to them, with the mind he served the Law of God, and kept his members from becoming weapons of sins.

20. There are therefore in us evil desires, by consenting not unto which we live not ill: there are in us lusts of sins, by obeying not which we perfect not evil, but by having them do not as yet perfect good. The Apostle shows both, that neither is good here perfected, where evil is so lusted after, nor evil here perfected, whereas such lust is not obeyed. The one forsooth he shows, where he says, “To will is present with me, but to perfect good is not;” the other, where he says, “Walk in the Spirit, and perfect not the lusts of the flesh.” For neither in the former place doth he say that to do good is

not with him, but “to perfect,” nor here doth he say, Have not “lusts of the flesh,” but “perfect not.” Therefore there take place in us evil lusts, when that pleases which is not lawful; but they are not perfected, when evil lusts are restrained by the mind serving the Law of God. And good takes place, when that, which wrongly pleases, takes not place through the good delight prevailing. But the perfection of good is not fulfilled, so long as by the flesh serving the law of sin, evil lust entices, and, although it be restrained, is yet moved. For there would be no need for it to be restrained, were it not moved. There will be at some time also the perfection of good, when the destruction of evil: the one will be highest, the other will be no more. And if we think that this is to be hoped for in this mortal state, we are deceived. For it shall be then, when death shall not be; and it shall be there, where shall be life eternal. For in that world, and in that kingdom, there shall be highest good, no evil: when there shall be, and where there shall be, highest love of wisdom, no labor of continence. Therefore the flesh is not evil, if it be void of evil, that is, of fault, whereby man was rendered faulty, not made ill, but himself making. For on either part, that is, both soul and body, being made good by the good God, himself made the evil, whereby he was made evil. From the guilt of which evil being already also set free through forgiveness, that he may not think what he hath done to be light, he yet wars with his own fault through continence. But far be it that there be any faults in such as reign in that peace which shall be hereafter; since in this state of war there are lessened daily in such as make progress, not sins only, but the very lusts also, with which, by not consenting, we strive, and by consenting unto which we sin.

21. That, therefore, the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, that there dwelleth not in our flesh good, that the law in our members is opposed to the law of the mind, is not a mingling of two natures caused of contrary principles, but a division of one against itself caused through desert of sin. We were not so in Adam, before that nature, having listened to and followed its deceiver, had despised and offended its Creator: that is, not the former life of man created, but the latter punishment of man condemned. From which condemnation when set free by Grace, through Jesus Christ, being free they contend with their punishment, having received not as yet full salvation, but already a pledge of salvation: but when not set free, they are both guilty by

reason of sins, and involved in punishments. But after this life for the guilty there will remain for ever punishment for their crime: for the free there will no more remain for ever either crime or punishment: but the good substances, spirit and flesh, will continue for ever, which God, Who is good, and incapable of change, created good although capable of change. But they will continue having been changed for the better, never from this time to be changed for the worse: all evil being utterly destroyed, both what man hath unjustly done, and what he hath justly suffered. And, these two kinds of evil perishing utterly, whereof the one is of iniquity going before, the other of unhappiness following after, the will of man will be upright without any depravity. There it will be clear and plain to all, what now many of the faithful believe, few understand, that evil is not a substance: but that, as a wound in a body, so in a substance, which hath made itself faulty, it hath begun to exist, when the disease hath commenced, and ceaseth to exist in it, when the healing hath been perfected. Therefore, all evil having arisen from us, and having been destroyed in us, our good also having been increased and perfected unto the height of most happy incorruption and immortality, of what kind shall either of our substances be? forasmuch as now, in this corruption and mortality, when as yet “the corruptible body weigheth down the soul;” and, what the Apostle saith, “the body is dead by reason of sin;” yet the same himself beareth such witness unto our flesh, that is, to our lowest and earthly part, as to say, what I made mention of a little above, “No one ever hated his own flesh.” And to add straightway, “but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ the Church.”

22. I say not, therefore, with what error, but with what utter madness, do the Manichees attribute our flesh to some, I know not what, fabled “race of darkness,” which they will have hath had its own nature without any beginning ever evil: whereas the true teacher exhorts men to love their own wives by the pattern of their own flesh, and exhorts them unto this very thing by the pattern also of Christ and the Church. Lastly, we must call to mind the whole place itself of the Epistle of the Apostle, relating greatly unto the matter in hand. “Husbands,” saith he, “love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of the water in the word: that He might set forth unto Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or



any such thing, but that it may be holy and unspotted. So,” saith he, “husbands also ought to love their own wives, as their own bodies. Whoso loveth his own wife, loveth himself.” Then he added, what we have already made mention of, “For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it, and cherisheth it; as also Christ the Church.” What saith the madness of most impure impiety in answer to these things? What say ye in answer to these things, ye Manichees; ye who wish to bring in upon us, as if out of the Epistles of the Apostles, two natures without beginning, one of good, the other of evil: and will not listen to the Epistles of the Apostles, that they may correct you from that sacrilegious perverseness? As ye read, “The flesh lusteth against the spirit,” and, “There dwelleth not in my flesh any good;” so read ye, “No one ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ the Church.” As ye read, “I see another law in my members, opposed to the law of my mind;” so read ye, “As Christ loved the Church, so also ought men to love their own wives, as their own bodies.” Be not ye crafty in the former witnesses of Holy Scripture, and deaf in this latter, and ye shall be correct in both. For, if ye receive the latter as right is, ye will endeavor to understand the former also as truth is.

23. The Apostle has made known to us certain three unions, Christ and the Church, husband and wife, spirit and flesh. Of these the former consult for the good of the latter, the latter wait upon the former. All the things are good, when, in them, certain set over by way of pre-eminence, certain made subject in a becoming manner, observe the beauty of order. Husband and wife receive command and pattern how they ought to be one with another. The command is, “Let wives be subject unto their own husbands, as unto the Lord; because the husband is the head of the wife;” and, “Husbands, love your wives.” But there is given a pattern, unto wives from the Church, unto husbands from Christ: “As the Church,” saith he, “is subject unto Christ, so also wives unto their own husbands in all things.” In like manner also, having given command to husbands to love their own wives, he added a pattern, “As Christ loved the Church.” But husbands he exhorted to it from a lower matter also, that is, from their own body: not only from a higher, that is, from their Lord. For he not only saith, “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church,” which is from an higher: but he said also, “Husbands ought to love their own wives, as their own bodies,”

which is from a lower: because both higher and lower are all good. And yet the woman received not pattern from the body, or flesh, to be so subject to the husband as the flesh to the spirit; but either the Apostle would have understood by consequence, what he omitted to state: or haply because the flesh lusteth against the spirit in the mortal and sick estate of this life, therefore he would not set the woman a pattern of subjection from it. But the men he would for this reason, because, although the spirit lusteth against the flesh, even in this it consults for the good of the flesh: not like as the flesh lusting against the spirit, by such opposition consulteth neither for the good of the spirit, nor for its own. Yet the good spirit would not consult for its good, whether by nourishing and cherishing its nature by forethought, or by resisting its faults by continence, were it not that each substance sheweth God to be the Creator of each, even by the seemliness of this its order. What is it, therefore, that with true madness ye both boast yourselves to be Christians, and with so great, perverseness contend against the Christian Scriptures, with eyes closed, or rather put out, asserting both that Christ hath appeared unto mortals in false flesh, and that the Church in the soul pertains to Christ, in the body to the devil, and that the male and female sex are works of the devil, not of God, and that the flesh is joined unto the spirit, as an evil substance unto a good substance?

24. If what we have made mention of out of the Apostolic Epistles seem to you to fall short of an answer, hear yet others, if ye have ears. What saith the utterly mad Manichaeon of the Flesh of Christ? That it was not true, but false. What saith the blessed Apostle to this? "Remember that Christ Jesus rose again from the dead of the seed of David, according to my Gospel." And Christ Jesus Himself saith, "Handle and see, that a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me to have." How is there truth in their doctrine, which asserts that in the Flesh of Christ there was falsehood? How was there in Christ no evil, in Whom was so great a lie? Because forsooth to men over-clean true flesh is an evil, and false flesh instead of true is not an evil: it is an evil, true flesh of one born of the seed of David, and it is no evil, false tongue of one saying, "Handle, and see, that a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me to have." Of the Church what saith the deceiver of men with deadly error? That on the side of souls it pertains unto Christ, on the side of bodies unto the devil? What to this saith the Teacher of the Gentiles

in faith and truth? “Know ye not,” saith he, “that your bodies are members of Christ?” Of the sex of male and female what saith the son of perdition? That either sex is not of God, but of the devil. What to this saith the Vessel of Election? “As,” saith he, “the woman from out the man, so also the man through the woman: but all things of God.” Of the flesh what saith the unclean spirit through the Manichaeon? That it is an evil substance, and not the creation of God, but of an enemy. What to this saith the Holy Spirit through Paul? “For as the body is one,” saith he, “and hath many members, but all the members of the body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.” And a little after; “God hath set,” saith he, “the members, each one of them in the body, as He willed.” Also a little after; “God,” saith he, “hath tempered the body, giving greater honor unto that to which it was wanting, that there should be no schisms in the body, but that the members have the self-same care one for another: and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it: or one member be glorified, all the members rejoice with it.” How is the flesh evil, when the souls themselves are admonished to imitate the peace of its members? How is it the creation of the enemy, when the souls themselves, which rule the bodies, take pattern from the members of the body, not to have schisms of enmities among themselves, in order that, what God hath granted unto the body by nature, this themselves also may love to have by grace? With good cause, writing to the Romans, “I beseech you,” saith he, “brethren, by the mercy of God, that ye present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God.” Without reason we contend that darkness is not light, nor light darkness, if we present a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God, of the bodies of the “nation of darkness.”

25. But, say they, how is the flesh by a certain likeness compared unto the Church? What! doth the Church lust against Christ? whereas the same Apostle said, “The Church is subject unto Christ.” Clearly the Church is subject unto Christ; because the spirit therefore lusteth against the flesh, that on every side the Church may be made subject to Christ; but the flesh lusteth against the spirit, because not as yet hath the Church received that peace which was promised perfect. And for this reason the Church is made subject unto Christ for the pledge of salvation, and the flesh lusteth against the spirit from the weakness of sickness. For neither were those other than

members of the Church, unto whom he thus spake, “Walk in the spirit, and fulfill not the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are opposed the one to the other; that ye do not what we would.” These things were assuredly spoken unto the Church, which if it were not made subject unto Christ, the spirit would not in it lust against the flesh through continence. By reason of which they were indeed able not to perfect the lusts of the flesh, but through the flesh lusting against the Spirit they were not able to do the things which they would, that is, not even to have the very lusts of the flesh. Lastly, why should we not confess that in spiritual men the Church is subject unto Christ, but in carnal men yet lusteth against Christ? Did not they lust against Christ unto whom it was said, “Is Christ divided?” and, “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. I have given unto you milk to drink as unto babes in Christ, not meat, for ye were not as yet able; but not even now are ye able: for ye are still carnal. For whereas there is among you emulation, and strife, are ye not carnal?” Against whom doth emulation and strife lust, but against Christ? For these lusts of the flesh Christ healeth in His own, but loveth in none. Whence the holy Church, so long as it hath such members, is not yet without spot or wrinkle. To these are added those other sins also, for which the daily cry of the whole Church is, “Forgive us our debts:” and, that we should not think spiritual persons exempt from these, not any one soever of carnal persons, nor any one soever of spiritual persons themselves, but he, who lay on the breast of the Lord, and whom He loved before others, saith, “If we shall say that we have not sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” But in every sin, more in what is greater, less in what is less, there is an act of lust against righteousness. And of Christ it is written: “Who was made unto us by God, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.” In every sin therefore without doubt there is an act of lust against Christ. But when He, Who “healeth all our sicknesses,” shall have led His Church unto the promised healing of sickness, then in none of its members shall there be any, even the very least spot or wrinkle. Then in no way shall the flesh lust against the spirit, and therefore there shall be no cause why the spirit also lust against the flesh. Then all this conflict shall come to an end, then there shall be the highest concord of both substances; then to such a degree shall no one there be carnal, that even the flesh itself shall be spiritual. What therefore each

one living after Christ doth with his flesh, whereas he both lusts against its evil lust, which he restrains, hereafter to be healed, which he holds, not yet healed; and yet nourisheth and cherisheth its good nature, since “no one ever hated his own flesh,” this also Christ doth with the Church, so far as it is lawful to compare lesser with greater matters. For He both represses it with rebukes, that it burst not being puffed up with impunity; and raises it up with consolations, that it sink not being weighed down with infirmity. Hence is that of the Apostle, “For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are rebuked of the Lord, that we be not condemned with this world.” And that in the Psalm, “After the multitude of my griefs in my heart, Thy consolations have gladdened my soul.” We are therefore then to hope for perfect soundness of our flesh without any opposition, when there shall be sure security of the Church of Christ without any fear.

26. Thus much will suffice to have treated on behalf of true Continence against the Manichees deceitfully continent, lest the fruitful and glorious labor of Continence, when it restrains and curbs the lowest part of us, that is, the body, from immoderate and unlawful pleasures, be believed not healthfully to chasten, but hostilely to persecute. Forsooth the body is indeed different from the nature of the soul, yet is it not alien from the nature of man: for the soul is not made up of body, but yet man is made up of soul and body: and assuredly, whom God frees, He frees the whole man. Whence our Saviour Himself also took upon Him the whole man, having deigned to free in us all that He made. They who hold contrary to this truth, what doth it profit them to restrain lusts? if, that is, they restrain any. What in them can be made clean through Continence, whose such Continence is unclean? and which ought not to be called Continence. Forsooth to hold what they hold is the poison of the devil; but Continence is the gift of God. But as not every one who suffers any thing, or with the greatest endurance suffers any pain whatever, possesses that virtue, which in like manner is the gift of God, and is called Patience; for many endure many torments, in order not to betray either such as are wickedly privy with them in their crimes, or themselves; many in order to satiate glowing lusts, and to obtain, or not to abandon those things, whereunto they are bound by chain of evil love; many on behalf of different and destructive errors, whereby they are

strongly held: of all of whom far be it from us to say that they have true patience: thus not every one, who contains in any thing, or who marvellously retrain even the very lusts of the flesh, or mind, is to be said to possess that continence, of the profit and beauty of which we are treating. For certain, what may seem marvellous to say, through incontinence contain themselves: as if a woman were to contain herself from her husband, because she hath sworn this to an adulterer. Certain through injustice, as if spouse yield not to spouse the due of sexual intercourse, because he or she is already able to overcome such appetite of the body. Also certain contain deceived by false faith, and hoping what is vain, and following after what is vain: among whom are all heretics, and whosoever under the name of religion are deceived by any error: whose continence would be true, if their faith also were true: but, whereas that is not to be called faith, on this account, because it is false; without doubt that also is unworthy the name of continence. For what? are we prepared to call continence, which we must truly say is the gift of God, sin? Far be from our hearts so hateful madness. But the blessed Apostle saith “Every thing that is not of faith is sin.” What therefore hath not faith, is not to be called continence.

27. There are also they who, in doing open service to evil demons, contain from pleasures of the body, that, through their means, they may satisfy unlawful pleasures, the violence and glow whereof they contain not. Whence also, (to name one case, and pass over the rest in silence by reason of the length of the discourse,) certain come not near even unto their own wives, whilst, as though clean, they essay through magic arts to gain access unto the wives of others. O marvellous continence, nay rather, singular wickedness and uncleanness! For, if it were true continence, the lust of the flesh ought rather to contain from adultery, than, in order to commit adultery, from marriage. Forsooth marriage continence is wont to ease this lust of the flesh, and to check its curb but thus far, that neither in marriage itself it run riot by immoderate license, but that a measure be observed, either such as is due to the weakness of the spouse, unto whom the Apostle enjoins not this, as of command, but yields it as of permission; or such as is suited for the begetting of sons, which was formerly the one alone occasion of sexual intercourse to both holy fathers and mothers. But continence doing this, that is, moderating, and in a certain way limiting in married

persons the lust of the flesh, and ordering in a certain way within fixed limits its unquiet and inordinate motion, uses well the evil of man, whom it makes and wills to make perfect good: as God uses even evil men, for their sake whom He perfects in goodness.

28. Far be it therefore that we say of continence, of which Scripture saith. “And this very thing was wisdom, to know whose gift it was,” that even they possess it, who, by containing, either serve errors, or overcome any lesser desires for this purpose, that they may fulfill others, by the greatness of which they are overcome. But that continence which is true, coming from above, wills not to repress some evils by other evils, but to heal all evils by goods. And, briefly to comprehend its mode of action, it is the place of continence to keep watch to restrain and heal all delights whatsoever of lust, which are opposed to the delight of wisdom. Whence without doubt they set it within too narrow bounds, who limit it to restraining the lusts of the body alone: certainly they speak better, who say that it pertains to Continence to rule in general lust or desire. Which desire is set down as a fault, nor is it only of the body, but also of the soul. For, if the desire of the body be in fornications and drunkennesses; hard enmities, strifes, emulations, lastly, hatreds, their exercise in the pleasure of the body, and not rather in the motion and troubled states of the soul? Yet the Apostle called all these “works of the flesh,” whether what pertained to the soul, or what pertained properly to the flesh, calling forsooth the man himself by the name of the flesh. Forsooth they are the works of man, whatsoever are not called works of God; forasmuch as man, who does these, lives after himself, not after God, so far as he does these. But there are other works of man, which are rather to be called works of God. “For it is God,” saith the Apostle, “Who worketh in you both to will and to do, according to His good pleasure.” Whence also is that, “For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

29. Thus the spirit of man, cleaving unto the Spirit of God, lusts against the flesh, that is, against itself: but for itself, in order that those motions, whether in the flesh or in the soul, after man, not after God, which as yet exist through the sickness man hath gotten, may be restrained by continence, that so health may be gotten; and man, not living after man,

may now be able to say, "But I live, now not I, but there liveth in me Christ." For where not I, there more happily I: and, when any evil motion after man arises, unto which he, who with the mind serves the Law of God, consents not, let him say that also, "Now it is not I that do this." To such forsooth are said those words, which we, as partners and sharers with them, ought to listen to. "If ye have risen together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the Right Hand of God: mind the things that are above, not what are upon earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God: when Christ your life shall have appeared, then ye also shall appear with Him in glory." Let us understand unto whom he is speaking, yea, rather, let us listen with more attention. For what more plain than this? what more clear? He is certainly speaking unto those, who had risen again with Christ, not yet surely in the flesh, but in the mind: whom he calls dead, and on this account the more living: for "your life," saith he, "is hid with Christ in God." Of such dead the speech is: "But I live, now not I, but there liveth in me Christ." They therefore, whose life was hidden in God, are admonished and exhorted to mortify their members, which are upon the earth. For this follows, "Mortify, therefore, your members, which are upon the earth." And, lest any through excess of dullness should think that such are to mortify the members of the body that are seen, straightway opening what it is he saith, "Fornication," saith he, "uncleanness, passion, evil lust, and covetousness, which is idolatry." But is it so to be believed, that they, who were already dead, and their life hidden with Christ in God, were still committing fornication, were still living in unclean habits and works, were still slaves to passions of evil lust and covetousness? What madman would thus think of such? What, therefore, would he that they mortify, save the motions themselves still living in a certain intrusion of their own, without the consent of our mind, without the action of the members of the body? And how are they mortified by the work of continence, save when we consent not to them with the mind, nor are the members of the body yielded to them as weapons; and, what is greater, and to be looked to with yet greater watchfulness of continence, our very thought itself, although in a certain way it be touched by their suggestion, and as it were, whisper, yet turns away from these, that it receive not delight from them, and turns to more delightful thoughts of things above: on this account naming them in discourse, that men abide not in them, but flee



from them. And this is brought to pass, if we listen effectually, with His help, Who, through His Apostle gives this command, “Seek things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the Right Hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not what are on earth.”

30. But, after that he had made mention of these evils, he added and said, “On account of which cometh the wrath of God on the sons of unbelief.” Surely it was a wholesome alarm that believers might not think that they could be saved on account of their faith alone, even although they should live in these evils: the Apostle James with most clear speech crying out against that notion, and saying, “If any say that he have faith, and have not works, shall his faith be able to save him?” Whence also here the Teacher of the Gentiles said, that on account of these evils the wrath of God cometh on the sons of unbelief. But when he saith, “Wherein ye also walked sometime, when ye were living therein;” he shows sufficiently that now they were not living therein. Forsooth unto these they had died, that their life might be hidden in God with Christ. When then they were now not living in them, they were now bidden to mortify such. Forsooth, themselves not living in the same, the things were living, as I have already shown a little above, and were called their members, that is to say, those faults which dwelt in their members; by a way of speech, that which is contained through that which contains; as it is said, The whole Forum talks of it, when men talk who are in the Forum. In this very way of speech it is sung in the Psalm, “Let all the earth worship Thee:” that is, all men who are in the earth.

31. “But now do ye also,” saith he, “put down all;” and he makes mention of several more evils of that sort. But what is it, that it is not enough for him to say, “Do ye put down all,” but that he added the conjunction and said, “ye also?” save that lest they should not think that they did those evils and lived in them with impunity on this account, because their faith set them free from wrath, which cometh upon the sons of unbelief, doing these things, and living in them without faith. Do ye also, saith he, put down those evils, on account of which cometh the wrath of God on the children of unbelief; nor promise yourselves impunity of them on account of merit of faith. But he would not say, “put ye down,” unto those who had already laid down so far as that they consented not to such faults, nor were yielding their

members to them as weapons of sin, save that the life of Saints stands in this past deed, and is still engaged in this work, so long as we are mortal. For, so long as the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, this business proceeds with great earnestness, resistance is offered unto evil delights, unclean lusts, carnal and shameful motions, by the sweetness of holiness, by the love of chastity, by spiritual vigor, and by the beauty of continence; thus they are laid down by them who are dead to them, and who live not in them by consenting. Thus, I say, they are put down, whilst they are weighed down by continued continence, that they rise not again. Whosoever, as though secure, shall cease from this laying aside of them, straightway they will assault the Citadel of the mind, and will themselves put it down thence, and will reduce it into slavery to them, captive after a base and unseemly fashion. Then sin will reign in the mortal body of man to obey its desires; then will it yield its members weapons of unrighteousness unto sin: and the last state of that man shall be worse than the former. For it is much more tolerable not to have begun a contest of this kind, than after one hath begun to have left the conflict, and to have become in place of a good warrior, or even in place of a conqueror, a captive. Whence the Lord saith not, whoso shall begin, but “Whoso shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved.”

32. But whether keenly contending, that we be not overcome, or overcoming divers times, or even with un hoped and unlooked for ease, let us give the glory unto Him Who giveth continence unto us. Let us remember that a certain just man said, “I shall never be moved:” and that it was showed him how rashly he had said this, attributing as though to his own strength, what was given to him from above. But this we have learnt from his own confession: for soon after he added, “Lord, in Thy will Thou hast given strength to my beauty; but Thou hast turned away Thy Face, and I was troubled.” Through a remedial Providence he was for a short time deserted by his Ruler, in order that he might not himself through deadly pride desert his Ruler. Therefore, whether here, where we engage with our faults in order to subdue and make them less, or there, as it shall be in the end, where we shall be void of every enemy, because of all infection, it is for our health that we are thus dealt with, in order that, “whoso glorieth, he may glory in the Lord.”

# ON LYING

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

DE MENDACIO.

TRANSLATED BY REV. H. BROWNE, M.A., OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,  
LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESAN COLLEGE, CHICHESTER.

This book appears from its place in the *Retractations* to have been written about a.d. 395, as it is the last work named in the first book, which contains those which he wrote before he was Bishop. Some editions represent it as addressed to Consentius, but not the mss. The latter are probably right, as his other work on the subject was written in answer to the inquiries of Consentius on the case of the Priscillianists many years later.—Bened. Ed.

*Retractations*, Book I. last Chapter.

“I have also written a Book on Lying, which though it takes some pains to understand, contains much that is useful for the exercise of the mind, and more that is profitable to morals, in inculcating the love of speaking the truth. This also I was minded to remove from my works, because it seemed to me obscure, and intricate, and altogether troublesome; for which reason I had not sent it abroad. And when I had afterwards written another book, under this title, *Against Lying*, much more had I determined and ordered that the former should cease to exist; which however was not done. Therefore in this retraction of my works, as I have found this still in being, I have ordered that it should remain; chiefly because therein are to be found some necessary things which in the other are not. Why the other has for its title, *Against Lying*, but this, *Of Lying*, the reason is this, that throughout the one is an open assault upon lying, whereas great part of this is taken up with the discussion of the question for and against. Both,

however, are directed to the same object. This book begins thus: “Magna quaestio est de Mendacio.”

1. There is a great question about Lying, which often arises in the midst of our every day business, and gives us much trouble, that we may not either rashly call that a lie which is not such, or decide that it is sometimes right to tell a lie, that is, a kind of honest, well-meant, charitable lie. This question we will painfully discuss by seeking with them that seek: whether to any good purpose, we need not take upon ourselves to affirm, for the attentive reader will sufficiently gather from the course of the discussion. It is, indeed, very full of dark corners, and hath many cavern-like windings, whereby it oft eludes the eagerness of the seeker; so that at one moment what was found seems to slip out of one’s hands, and anon comes to light again, and then is once more lost to sight. At last, however, the chase will bear down more surely, and will overtake our sentence. Wherein if there is any error, yet as Truth is that which setteth free from all error, and Falsehood that which entangleth in all error, one never errs more safely, methinks, than when one errs by too much loving the truth, and too much rejecting of falsehood. For they who find great fault say it is too much, whereas peradventure Truth would say after all, it is not yet enough. But whoso readest, thou wilt do well to find no fault until thou have read the whole; so wilt thou have less fault to find. Eloquence thou must not look for: we have been intent upon things, and upon dispatch in putting out of hand a matter which nearly concerns our every day life, and therefore have had small pains, or almost none, to bestow upon words.

2. Setting aside, therefore, jokes, which have never been accounted lies, seeing they bear with them in the tone of voice, and in the very mood of the joker a most evident indication that he means no deceit, although the thing he utters be not true: touching which kind of discourse, whether it be meet to be used by perfect minds, is another question which we have not at this time taken in hand to clear; but setting jokes apart, the first point to be attended to, is, that a person should not be thought to lie, who lieth not.

3. For which purpose we must see what a lie is. For not every one who says a false thing lies, if he believes or opines that to be true which he says. Now between believing and opining there is this difference, that sometimes he

who believes feels that he does not know that which he believes, (although he may know himself to be ignorant of a thing, and yet have no doubt at all concerning it, if he most firmly believes it:) whereas he who opines, thinks he knows that which he does not know. Now whoever utters that which he holds in his mind either as belief or as opinion, even though it be false, he lies not. For this he owes to the faith of his utterance, that he thereby produce that which he holds in his mind, and has in that way in which he produces it. Not that he is without fault, although he lie not, if either he believes what he ought not to believe, or thinks he knows what he knows not, even though it should be true: for he accounts an unknown thing for a known. Wherefore, that man lies, who has one thing in his mind and utters another in words, or by signs of whatever kind. Whence also the heart of him who lies is said to be double; that is, there is a double thought: the one, of that thing which he either knows or thinks to be true and does not produce; the other, of that thing which he produces instead thereof, knowing or thinking it to be false. Whence it comes to pass, that he may say a false thing and yet not lie, if he thinks it to be so as he says although it be not so; and, that he may say a true thing, and yet lie, if he thinks it to be false and utters it for true, although in reality it be so as he utters it. For from the sense of his own mind, not from the verity or falsity of the things themselves, is he to be judged to lie or not to lie. Therefore he who utters a false thing for a true, which however he opines to be true, may be called erring and rash: but he is not rightly said to lie; because he has not a double heart when he utters it, neither does he wish to deceive, but is deceived. But the fault of him who lies, is, the desire of deceiving in the uttering of his mind; whether he do deceive, in that he is believed when uttering the false thing; or whether he do not deceive, either in that he is not believed, or in that he utters a true thing with will to deceive, which he does not think to be true: wherein being believed, he does not deceive though it was his will to deceive: except that he deceives in so far as he is thought to know or think as he utters.

4. But it may be a very nice question whether in the absence of all will to deceive, lying is altogether absent. Thus, put the case that a person shall speak a false thing, which he esteems to be false, on the ground that he thinks he is not believed, to the intent, that in that way falsifying his faith he

may deter the person to whom he speaks, which person he perceives does not choose to believe him. For here is a person who tells a lie with studied purpose of not deceiving, if to tell a lie is to utter any thing otherwise than you know or think it to be. But if it be no lie, unless when something is uttered with wish to deceive, that person lies not, who says a false thing, knowing or thinking it to be false, but says it on purpose that the person to whom he speaks by not believing him may not be deceived, because the speaker either knows or thinks the other will not believe him. Whence if it appear to be possible that a person should say a false thing on purpose that he to whom it is said may not be deceived, on the other hand there is this opposite case, the case of a person saying the truth on purpose that he may deceive. For if a man determines to say a true thing because he perceives he is not believed, that man speaks truth on purpose that he may deceive: for he knows or thinks that what is said may be accounted false, just because it is spoken by him. Wherefore in saying a true thing on purpose that it may be thought false, he says a true thing on purpose to deceive. So that it may be inquired, which rather lies: he who says a false thing that he may not deceive, or he who says a true thing that he may deceive? the one knowing or thinking that he says a false thing, and the other knowing or thinking that he says a true thing? For we have already said that the person who does not know the thing to be false which he utters, does not lie if he thinks it to be true; and that that person rather lies who utters even a true thing when he thinks it false: because it is by the sense of their mind that they are to be judged. Concerning these persons therefore, whom we have set forth, there is no small question. The one, who knows or thinks he says a false thing, and says it on purpose that he may not deceive: as, if he knows a certain road to be beset by robbers, and fearing lest some person for whose safety he is anxious should go by that road, which person he knows does not trust him, should tell him that that road has no robbers, on purpose that he may not go by it, as he will think there are robbers there precisely because the other has told him there are none, and he is resolved not to believe him, accounting him a liar. The other, who knowing or thinking that to be true which he says, says it on purpose that he may deceive: for instance, if he tells a person who does not believe him, that there are robbers in that road where he really knows them to be, that he to whom he tells it may the rather go by that road and so fall among robbers, because he thinks that to be

false, which the other told him. Which then of these lies? the one who has chosen to say a false thing that he may not deceive? or the other who has chosen to say a true thing that he may deceive? that one, who in saying a false thing aimed that he to whom he spake should follow the truth? or this one, who in saying a true thing aimed that he to whom he spake should follow a falsehood? Or haply have both lied? the one, because he wished to say a false thing: the other, because he wished to deceive? Or rather, has neither lied? not the one, because he had the will not to deceive: not the other, because he had the will to speak the truth? For the question is not now which of them sinned, but which of them lied: as indeed it is presently seen that the latter sinned, because by speaking a truth he brought it about that a person should fall among robbers, and that the former has not sinned, or even has done good, because by speaking a false thing he has been the means of a person's avoiding destruction. But then these instances may be turned the other way, so that the one should be supposed to wish some more grievous suffering to the person whom he wishes not to be deceived; for there are many cases of persons who through knowing certain things to be true, have brought destruction upon themselves, if the things were such as ought to have continued unknown to them: and the other may be supposed to wish some convenience to result to the person whom he wishes to be deceived; for there have been instances of persons who would have destroyed themselves had they known some evil that had really befallen those who were dear to them, and through deeming it false have spared themselves: and so to be deceived has been a benefit to them, as to others it has been a hurt to know the truth. The question therefore is not with what purpose of doing a kindness or a hurt, either the one said a false thing that he might not deceive, or the other a true thing that he might deceive: but, setting apart the convenience or inconvenience of the persons spoken to, in so far as relates to the very truth and falsehood, the question is, whether both of them or neither has lied. For if a lie is an utterance with will of uttering a false thing, that man has rather lied who willed to say a false thing, and said what he willed, albeit he said it of set purpose not to deceive. But if a lie is any utterance whatever with will to deceive; then not the former has lied, but the latter, who even in speaking truth willed to deceive. And if a lie is an utterance with will of any falsity, both have lied; because both the former willed his utterance to be false, and the latter

willed a false thing to be believed concerning his utterance which was true. Further, if a lie is an utterance of a person wishing to utter a false thing that he may deceive, neither has lied; because both the former in saying a false thing had the will to make a true thing believed, and the latter to say a true thing in order that he might make a false thing believed. We shall be clear then of all rashness and all lying, if, what we know to be true or right to be believed, we utter when need is, and wish to make that thing believed which we utter. If, however, either thinking that to be true which is false, or accounting as known that which is to us unknown, or believing what we ought not to believe, or uttering it when need is not, we yet have no other aim than to make that believed which we utter; we do not stand clear indeed of the error of temerity, but we do stand clear of all lying. For there is no need to be afraid of any of those definitions, when the mind has a good conscience, that it utters that which to be true it either knows, or opines, or believes, and that it has no wish to make any thing believed but that which it utters.

5. But whether a lie be at some times useful, is a much greater and more concerning question. Whether, as above, it be a lie, when a person has no will to deceive, or even makes it his business that the person to whom he says a thing shall not be deceived although he did wish the thing itself which he uttered to be false, but this on purpose that he might cause a truth to be believed; whether, again, it be a lie when a person willingly utters even a truth for the purpose of deceiving; this may be doubted. But none doubts that it is a lie when a person willingly utters a falsehood for the purpose of deceiving: wherefore a false utterance put forth with will to deceive is manifestly a lie. But whether this alone be a lie, is another question. Meanwhile, taking this kind of lie, in which all agree, let us inquire, whether it be sometimes useful to utter a falsehood with will to deceive. They who think it is, advance testimonies to their opinion, by alleging the case of Sarah, who, when she had laughed, denied to the Angels that she laughed: of Jacob questioned by his father, and answering that he was the elder son Esau: likewise that of the Egyptian midwives, who to save the Hebrew infants from being slain at their birth, told a lie, and that with God's approbation and reward: and many such like instances they pick out, of lies told by persons whom you would not dare to blame, and so must



own that it may sometimes be not only not blameworthy, but even praiseworthy to tell a lie. They add also a case with which to urge not only those who are devoted to the Divine Books, but all men and common sense, saying, Suppose a man should take refuge with thee, who by thy lie might be saved from death, wouldest thou not tell it? If a sick man should ask a question which it is not expedient that he should know, and might be more grievously afflicted even by thy returning him no answer, wilt thou venture either to tell the truth to the destruction of the man's life, or rather to hold thy peace, than by a virtuous and merciful lie to be serviceable to his weak health? By these and such like arguments they think they most plentifully prove, that if occasion of doing good require, we may sometimes tell a lie.

6. On the other hand, those who say that we must never lie, plead much more strongly, using first the Divine authority, because in the very Decalogue it is written "Thou shall not bear false witness;" under which general term it comprises all lying: for whoso utters any thing bears witness to his own mind. But lest any should contend that not every lie is to be called false witness, what will he say to that which is written, "The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul:" and lest any should suppose that this may be understood with the exception of some liars, let him read in another place, "Thou wilt destroy all that speak leasing." Whence with His own lips the Lord saith, "Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Hence the Apostle also in giving precept for the putting off of the old man, under which name all sins are understood, says straightway, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak ye truth."

7. Neither do they confess that they are awed by those citations from the Old Testament which are alleged as examples of lies: for there, every incident may possibly be taken figuratively, although it really did take place: and when a thing is either done or said figuratively, it is no lie. For every utterance is to be referred to that which it utters. But when any thing is either done or said figuratively, it utters that which it signifies to those for whose understanding it was put forth. Whence we may believe in regard of those persons of the prophetic times who are set forth as authoritative, that in all that is written of them they acted and spoke prophetically; and no less, that there is a prophetic meaning in all those incidents of their lives which

by the same prophetic Spirit have been accounted worthy of being recorded in writing. As to the midwives, indeed, they cannot say that these women did through the prophetic Spirit, with purpose of signifying a future truth, tell Pharaoh one thing instead of another, (albeit that Spirit did signify something, without their knowing what was doing in their persons:) but, they say that these women were according to their degree approved and rewarded of God. For if a person who is used to tell lies for harm's sake comes to tell them for the sake of doing good, that person has made great progress. But it is one thing that is set forth as laudable in itself, another that in comparison with a worse is preferred. It is one sort of gratulation that we express when a man is in sound health, another when a sick man is getting better. In the Scripture, even Sodom is said to be justified in comparison with the crimes of the people Israel. And to this rule they apply all the instances of lying which are produced from the Old Books, and are found not reprehended, or cannot be reprehended: either they are approved on the score of a progress towards improvement and hope of better things, or in virtue of some hidden signification they are not altogether lies.

8. For this reason, from the books of the New Testament, except the figurative pre-significations used by our Lord, if thou consider the life and manners of the Saints, their actions and sayings, nothing of the kind can be produced which should provoke to imitation of lying. For the simulation of Peter and Barnabas is not only recorded, but also reprov'd and corrected. For it was not, as some suppose, out of the same simulation that even Paul the Apostle either circumcised Timothy, or himself celebrated certain ceremonies according to the Jewish rite; but he did so, out of that liberty of his mind whereby he preached that neither are the Gentiles the better for circumcision, nor the Jews the worse. Wherefore he judged that neither the former should be tied to the custom of the Jews, nor the Jews deterred from the custom of their fathers. Whence are those words of his: "Is any man called being circumcised let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." How can a man become uncircumcised after circumcision? but let him not do so, saith he: let him not so live as if he had become uncircumcised, that is, as if

he had covered again with flesh the part that was bared, and ceased to be a Jew; as in another place he saith, “Thy circumcision is become uncircumcision.” And this the Apostle said, not as though he would compel either those to remain in uncircumcision, or the Jews in the custom of their fathers: but that neither these nor those should be forced to the other custom; and, each should have power of abiding in his own custom, not necessity of so doing. For neither if the Jew should wish, where it would disturb no man, to recede from Jewish observances, would he be prohibited by the Apostle, since the object of his counselling to abide therein was that Jews might not by being troubled about superfluous things be hindered from coming to those things which are necessary to salvation. Neither would it be prohibited by him, if any of the Gentiles should wish to be circumcised for the purpose of showing that he does not detest the same as noxious, but holds it indifferently, as a seal, the usefulness of which had already passed away with time; for it did not follow that, if there were now no salvation to be had from it, there was destruction to be dreaded therefrom. And for this reason, Timothy, having been called in uncircumcision, yet because his mother was a Jewess and he was bound, in order to gain his kindred, to show them that he had not learnt in the Christian discipline to abominate the sacraments of the old Law, was circumcised by the Apostle; that in this way they might prove to the Jews, that the reason why the Gentiles do not receive them, is not that they are evil and were perniciously observed by the Fathers, but because they are no longer necessary to salvation after the advent of that so great Sacrament, which through so long times the whole of that ancient Scripture in its prophetic prefigurations did travail in birth withal. For he would circumcise Titus also, when the Jews urged this, but that false brethren, privily brought in, wished it to be done to the intent they might have it to disseminate concerning Paul himself as a token that he had given place to the truth of their preaching, who said that the hope of Gospel salvation is in circumcision of the flesh and observances of that kind, and that without these Christ profiteth no man: whereas on the contrary Christ would nothing profit them, who should be circumcised because they thought that in it was salvation; whence that saying, “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” Out of this liberty, therefore, did Paul keep the observances of his fathers, but with this one precaution

and express declaration, that people should not suppose that without these was no Christian salvation. Peter, however, by his making as though salvation consisted in Judaism, was compelling the Gentiles to judaize; as is shown by Paul's words, where he says, "Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" For they would be under no compulsion unless they saw that he observed them in such manner as if beside them could be no salvation. Peter's simulation therefore is not to be compared to Paul's liberty. And while we ought to love Peter for that he willingly received correction, we must not bolster up lying even by the authority of Paul, who both recalled Peter to the right path in the presence of them all, lest the Gentiles through him should be compelled to judaize; and bare witness to his own preaching, that whereas he was accounted hostile to the traditions of the fathers in that he would not impose them on the Gentiles, he did not despise to celebrate them himself according to the custom of his fathers, and therein sufficiently showed that this has remained in them at the Coming of Christ; that neither to the Jews they are pernicious, nor to the Gentiles necessary, nor henceforth to any of mankind means of salvation.

9. But if no authority for lying can be alleged, neither from the ancient Books, be it because that is not a lie which is received to have been done or said in a figurative sense, or be it because good men are not challenged to imitate that which in bad men, beginning to amend, is praised in comparison with the worse; nor yet from the books of the New Testament, because Peter's correction rather than his simulation, even as his tears rather than his denial, is what we must imitate: then, as to those examples which are fetched from common life, they assert much more confidently that there is no trust to be given to these. For first they teach, that a lie is iniquity, by many proofs of holy writ, especially by that which is written, "Thou, Lord, hatest all workers of iniquity, thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing." For either as the Scripture is wont, in the following clause it expounds the former; so that, as iniquity is a term of a wider meaning, leasing is named as the particular sort of iniquity intended: or if they think there is any difference between the two, leasing is by so much worse than iniquity as "thou wilt destroy" is heavier than "thou hatest." For it may be that God hates a person to that degree more mildly, as not to destroy him, but whom He destroys He hates the more exceedingly, by how much He punisheth

more severely. Now He hateth all who work iniquity: but all who speak leasing He also destroyeth. Which thing being fixed, who of them which assert this will be moved by those examples, when it is said, suppose a man should seek shelter with thee who by thy lie may be saved from death? For that death which men are foolishly afraid of who are not afraid to sin, kills not the soul but the body, as the Lord teacheth in the Gospel; whence He charges us not to fear that death: but the mouth which lies kills not the body but the soul. For in these words it is most plainly written, "The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul." How then can it be said without the greatest perverseness, that to the end one man may have life of the body, it is another man's duty to incur death of the soul? The love of our neighbor hath its bounds in each man's love of himself. "Thou shall love," saith He, "thy neighbor as thyself." How can a man be said to love as himself that man, for whom that he may secure a temporal life, himself loseth life eternal? Since if for his temporal life he lose but his own temporal life, that is not to love as himself, but more than himself: which exceeds the rule of sound doctrine. Much less then is he by telling a lie to lose his own eternal for another's temporal life. His own temporal life, of course, for his neighbor's eternal life a Christian man will not hesitate to lose: for this example has gone before, that the Lord died for us. To this point He also saith, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." For none is so foolish as to say that the Lord did other than consult for the eternal salvation of men, whether in doing what He hath charged us to do, or in charging us to do what Himself hath done. Since then by lying eternal life is lost, never for any man's temporal life must a lie be told. And as to those who take it ill and are indignant that one should refuse to tell a lie, and thereby slay his own soul in order that another may grow old in the flesh; what if by our committing theft, what if by committing adultery, a person might be delivered from death: are we therefore to steal, to commit whoredom? They cannot prevail with themselves in a case of this kind: namely, if a person should bring a halter and demand that one should yield to his carnal lust, declaring that he will hang himself unless his request be granted: they cannot prevail with themselves to comply for the sake of, as they say, saving a life. If this is absurd and wicked, why should a man corrupt his own soul with a lie in order that another may live in the body,

when, if he were to give his body to be corrupted with such an object, he would in the judgment of all men be held guilty of nefarious turpitude? Therefore the only point to be attended to in this question is, whether a lie be iniquity. And since this is asserted by the texts above rehearsed, we must see that to ask, whether a man ought to tell a lie for the safety of another, is just the same as asking whether for another's safety a man ought to commit iniquity. But if the salvation of the soul rejects this, seeing it cannot be secured but by equity, and would have us prefer it not only to another's, but even to our own temporal safety: what remains, say they, that should make us doubt that a lie ought not to be told under any circumstances whatsoever? For it cannot be said that there is aught among temporal goods greater or dearer than the safety and life of the body. Wherefore if not even that is to be preferred to truth, what can be put in our way for the sake of which they who think it is sometimes right to lie, can urge that a lie ought to be told?

10. As concerning purity of body; here indeed a very honorable regard seems to come in the way, and to demand a lie in its behalf; to wit, that if the assault of the ravisher may be escaped by means of a lie, it is indubitably right to tell it: but to this it may easily be answered, that there is no purity of body except as it depends on integrity of mind; this being broken, the other must needs fall, even though it seem intact; and for this reason it is not to be reckoned among temporal things, as a thing that might be taken away from people against their will. By no means therefore must the mind corrupt itself by a lie for the sake of its body, which it knows remaineth incorrupt if from the mind itself incorruptness depart not. For that which by violence, with no lust foregoing, the body suffereth, is rather to be called deforcement than corruption. Or if all deforcement is corruption, then not every corruption hath turpitude, but only that which lust hath procured, or to which lust hath consented. Now by how much the mind is more excellent than the body, so much the more heinous is the wickedness if that be corrupted. There, then, purity can be preserved, because there none but a voluntary corruption can have place. For assuredly if the ravisher assault the body, and there is no escaping him either by contrary force, or by any contrivance or lie, we must needs allow that purity cannot be violated by another's lust. Wherefore, since no man doubts that

the mind is better than the body, to integrity of body we ought to prefer integrity of mind, which can be preserved for ever. Now who will say that the mind of him who tells a lie hath its integrity? Indeed lust itself is rightly defined, An appetite of the mind by which to eternal goods any temporal goods whatever are preferred. Therefore no man can prove that it is at any time right to tell a lie, unless he be able to show that any eternal good can be obtained by a lie. But since each man departs from eternity just in so far as he departs from truth, it is most absurd to say, that by departing therefrom it is possible for any man to attain to any good. Else if there be any eternal good which truth compriseth not, it will not be a true good, therefore neither will it be good, because it will be false. But as the mind to the body, so must also truth be preferred to the mind itself, so that the mind should desire it not only more than the body, but even more than its own self. So will the mind be more entire and chaste, when it shall enjoy the immutability of truth rather than its own mutability. Now if Lot, being so righteous a man that he was meet to entertain even Angels, offered his daughters to the lust of the Sodomites, to the intent, that the bodies of women rather than of men might be corrupted by them; how much more diligently and constantly ought the mind's chasteness in the truth to be preserved, seeing it is more truly preferable to its body, than the body of a man to the body of a woman?

11. But if any man supposes that the reason why it is right for a person to tell a lie for another is, that he may live the while, or not be offended in those things which he much loveth, to the end he may attain unto eternal truth by being taught: that man doth not understand, in the first place, that there is no flagitious thing which he may not upon the same ground be compelled to commit, as has been above demonstrated; and in the next place, that the authority of the doctrine itself is cut off and altogether undone if those whom we essay to bring thereunto, are by our lie made to think that it is somewhiles right to lie. For seeing the doctrine which bringeth salvation consisteth partly in things to be believed, partly in things to be understood; and there is no attaining unto those things which are to be understood, unless first those things are believed, which are to be believed; how can there be any believing one who thinks it is sometimes right to lie, lest haply he lie at the moment when he teacheth us to believe? For how can

it be known whether he have at that moment some cause, as he thinks, for a well-meant lie, deeming that by a false story a man may be frightened and kept from lust, and in this way account that by telling a lie he is doing good even in spiritual things? Which kind of lie once admitted and approved, all discipline of faith is subverted altogether; and this being subverted, neither is there any attaining to understanding, for the receiving of which that discipline nurtureth the babes: and so all the doctrine of truth is done away, giving place to most licentious falsehood, if a lie, even well-meant, may from any quarter have place opened for it to enter in. For either whoso tells a lie prefers temporal advantages, his own or another's, to truth; than which what can be more perverse? or when by aid of a lie he wishes to make a person fit for gaining the truth, he bars the approach to truth, for by wishing when he lies to be accommodating, it comes to pass that when he speaks the truth, he cannot be depended upon. Wherefore, either we must not believe good men, or we must believe those whom we think obliged sometimes to tell a lie, or we must not believe that good men sometimes tell lies: of these three the first is pernicious, the second foolish; it remains therefore that good men should never tell lies.

12. Thus has the question been on both sides considered and treated; and still it is not easy to pass sentence: but we must further lend diligent hearing to those who say, that no deed is so evil, but that in avoidance of a worse it ought to be done; moreover that the deeds of men include not only what they do, but whatever they consent to be done unto them. Wherefore, if cause have arisen that a Christian man should choose to burn incense to idols, that he might not consent to bodily defilement which the persecutor threatened him withal, unless he should do so, they think they have a right to ask why he should not also tell a lie to escape so foul a disgrace. For the consent itself to endure violation of the person rather than to burn incense to idols, this, they say, is not a passive thing, but a deed; which rather than do, he chose to burn incense. How much more readily then would he have chosen a lie, if by a lie he might ward off from a holy body so shocking a disgrace?

13. In which proposition these points may well deserve to be questioned: whether such consent is to be accounted as a deed: or whether that is to be



called consent which hath not approbation: or whether it be approbation, when it is said, “It is expedient to suffer this rather than do that;” and whether the person spoken of did right to burn incense rather than suffer violation of his body; and whether it would be right rather to tell a lie, if that was the alternative proposed, than to burn incense? But if such consent is to be accounted as a deed, then are they murderers who have chosen rather to be put to death than bear false witness, yea, what is worse, they are murderers of themselves. For why, at this rate, should it not be said that they have slain themselves, because they chose that this should be done to them that they might not do what they were urged to do? Or, if it be accounted a worse thing to slay another than himself, what if these terms were offered to a Martyr, that, upon his refusing to bear false witness of Christ and to sacrifice to demons, then, before his eyes, not some other man, but his own father should be put to death; his father entreating him that he would not by his persevering permit that to be done? Is it not manifest, that, upon his remaining steadfast in his purpose of most faithful testimony, they alone would be the murderers who should slay his father, and not he a parricide into the bargain? As therefore, in this case, the man would be no party to this so heinous deed, for choosing, rather than violate his faith by false testimony, that his own father should be put to death by others, (yea, though that father were a sacrilegious person whose soul would be snatched away to punishment;) so the like consent, in the former case, would not make him a party to that so foul disgrace, if he refused to do evil himself, let others do what they might in consequence of his not doing it. For what do such persecutors say, but, “Do evil that we may not?” If the case were so, that our doing evil would make them not to have done it, even then it would not be our duty by doing wickedness ourselves to vote them harmless; but as in fact they are already doing it when they say nothing of the kind, why are they to have us to keep them company in wickedness rather than be vile and noisome by themselves? For that is not to be called consent; seeing that we do not approve what they do, always wishing that they would not, and, as much as in us lies, hindering them that they should not do it, and, when it is done, not only not committing it with them, but with all possible detestation condemning the same.

14. "How," sayest thou, "is it not his doing as well as theirs, when they would not do this, if he would do that?" Why, at this rate we go housebreaking with house-breakers, because if we did not shut the door, they would not break it open: and we go and murder with highwaymen, if it chance we know that they are going to do it, because if we killed them out of hand, they would not kill others. Or, if a person confess to us that he is going to commit a parricide, we commit it along with him, if, being able, we do not slay him before he can do the deed when we cannot in some other way prevent or thwart him. For it may be said, word for word as before, "Thou hast done it as well as he; for he had not done this, hadst thou done that." With my good will, neither ill should be done; but only the one was in my power, and I could take care that this should not be done; the other rested with another, and when by my good advice I could not quench the purpose, I was not bound by my evil deed to thwart the doing. It is therefore no approving of a sinner, that one refuses to sin for him; and neither the one nor the other is liked by him who would that neither were done; but in that which pertains to him, he hath the power to do it or not, and with that he perpetrateth it not; in that which pertains to another, he hath only the will to wish it or not, and with that he condemneth. And therefore, on their offering those terms, and saying, "If thou burn not incense, this shalt thou suffer;" if he should answer, "For me, I choose neither, I detest both, I consent unto you in none of these things:" in uttering these and the like words, which certainly, because they would be true, would afford them no consent no approbation of his, let him suffer at their hands what he might, to his account would be set down the receipt of wrongs, to theirs the commission of sins. "Ought he then," it may be asked, "to suffer his person to be violated rather than burn incense?" If the question be what he ought, he ought to do neither. For should I say that he ought to do any of these things, I shall approve this or that, whereas I reprobate both. But if the question be, which of these he ought in preference to avoid, not being able to avoid both but able to avoid one or other: I will answer, "His own sin, rather than another's; and rather a lighter sin being his own, than a heavier being another's." For, reserving the point for more diligent inquiry, and granting in the mean while that violation of the person is worse than burning incense, yet the latter is his own, the former another's deed, although he had it done to him; now, whose the deed, his the sin. For

though murder is a greater sin than stealing, yet it is worse to steal than to suffer murder. Therefore, if it were proposed to any man that, if he would not steal he should be killed, that is, murder should be committed upon him; being he could not avoid both, he would prefer to avoid that which would be his own sin, rather than that which would be another's. Nor would the latter become his act for being committed upon him, and because he might avoid it if he would commit a sin of his own.

15. The whole stress, then, of this question comes to this; whether it be true universally that no sin of another, committed upon thee, is to be imputed to thee, if, being able to avoid it by a lighter sin of thine own, thou do it not; or whether there be an exception of all bodily defilement. No man says that a person is defiled by being murdered, or cast into prison, or bound in chains, or scourged, or afflicted with other tortures and pains, or proscribed and made to suffer most grievous losses even to utter nakedness, or stripped of honors, and subjected to great disgrace by reproaches of whatsoever kind; whatever of all these a man may have unjustly suffered, no man is so senseless as to say that he is thereby defiled. But if he have filth poured all over him, or poured into his mouth, or crammed into him, or if he be carnally used like a woman; then almost all men regard him with a feeling of horror, and they call him defiled and unclean. One must conclude then that the sins of others, be they what they may, those always excepted which defile him on whom they are committed, a man must not seek to avoid by sin of his own, either for himself or for any other, but rather he must put up with them, and suffer bravely; and if by no sins of his own he ought to avoid them, therefore not by a lie: but those which by being committed upon a man do make him unclean, these we are bound to avoid even by sinning ourselves; and for this reason those things are not to be called sins, which are done for the purpose of avoiding that uncleanness. For whatever is done, in consideration that the not doing it were just cause of blame, that thing is not sin. Upon the same principle, neither is that to be called uncleanness when there is no way of avoiding it; for even in that extremity he who suffers it has what he may do aright, namely, patiently bear what he cannot avoid. Now no man while acting aright can be defiled by any corporal contagion. For the unclean in the sight of God is every one who is unrighteous; clean therefore is every one who is righteous; if not in the sight

of men, yet in the sight of God, Who judges without error. Nay, even in the act of suffering that defilement with power given of avoiding it, it is not by the mere contact that the man is defiled; but by the sin of refusing to avoid it when he might. For that would be no sin, whatever might be done for the avoiding of it. Whoever therefore, for the avoiding of it, shall tell a lie, sinneth not.

16. Or, are some lies, also, to be excepted, so that it were better to suffer this than to commit those? If so, then not every thing that is done in order to the avoiding of that defilement ceases to be sin; seeing there are some lies to commit which is worse than to suffer that foul violence. For, suppose quest be making after a person that his body may be deflowered, and that it be possible to screen him by a lie; who dares to say that even in such a case a lie ought not be told? But, if the lie by which he may be concealed be one which may hurt the fair fame of another, by bringing upon him a false accusation of that very uncleanness, to suffer which the other is sought after; as, if it should be said to the inquirer, "Go to such an one," (naming some chaste man who is a stranger to vices of this kind,) "and he will procure for you one whom you will find a more willing subject, for he knows and loves such;" and thereby the person might be diverted from him whom he sought: I know not whether one man's fair fame ought to be violated by a lie, in order that another's body may not be violated by lust to which he is a stranger. And in general, it is never right to tell a lie for any man, such as may hurt another, even if the hurt be slighter than would be the hurt to him unless such a lie were told. Because neither must another man's bread be taken from him against his will, though he be in good health, and it is to feed one who is weak; nor must an innocent man, against his will, be beaten with rods, that another may not be killed. Of course, if they are willing, let it be done, because they are not hurt if they be willing that so it should be: but whether, even with his own consent, a man's fair fame ought to be hurt with a false charge of foul lusts, in order that lust may be averted from another's body, is a great question. And I know not whether it be easy to find in what way it can be just that a man's fair fame, even with his consent, should be stained with a false charge of lust, any more than a man's body should be polluted by the lust itself against his will.

17. But yet if the option were proposed to the man who chose to burn incense to idols rather than yield his body to abominable lust, that, if he wished to avoid that, he should violate the fame of Christ by some lie; he would be most mad to do it. I say more: that he would be mad, if, to avoid another man's lust, and not to have that done upon his person which he would suffer with no lust of his own, he should falsify Christ's Gospel with false praises of Christ; more eschewing that another man should corrupt his body, than himself to corrupt the doctrine of sanctification of souls and bodies. Wherefore, from the doctrine of religion, and from those utterances universally, which are uttered on behalf of the doctrine of religion, in the teaching and learning of the same, all lies must be utterly kept aloof. Nor can any cause whatever be found, one should think, why a lie should be told in matters of this kind, when in this doctrine it is not right to tell a lie for the very purpose of bringing a person to it the more easily. For, once break or but slightly diminish the authority of truth, and all things will remain doubtful: which unless they be believed true, cannot be held as certain. It is lawful then either to him that discourses, disputes, and preaches of things eternal, or to him that narrates or speaks of things temporal pertaining to edification of religion and piety, to conceal at fitting time whatever seems fit to be concealed: but to tell a lie is never lawful, therefore neither to conceal by telling a lie.

18. This being from the very first and most firmly established, touching other lies the question proceeds more securely. But by consequence we must also see that all lies must be kept aloof which hurt any man unjustly: because no man is to have a wrong, albeit a lighter one is done to him, that another may have a heavier kept from him. Nor are those lies to be allowed, which, though they hurt not another, yet do nobody any good, and are hurtful to the persons themselves who gratuitously tell them. Indeed, these are the persons who are properly to be called liars. For there is a difference between lying and being a liar. A man may tell a lie unwillingly; but a liar loves to lie, and inhabits in his mind in the delight of lying. Next to such are those to be placed who by a lie wish to please men, not that they may do wrong or bring reproach upon any man; for we have already before put away that kind; but that they may be pleasant in conversation. These, differ from the class in which we have placed liars in this respect, that liars delight

in lying, rejoicing in deceit for its own sake: but these lust to please by agreeable talk, and yet would rather please by saying things that were true, but when they do not easily find true things to say that are pleasant to the hearers, they choose rather to tell lies than to hold their tongues. Yet it is difficult for these sometimes to undertake a story which is the whole of it false; but most commonly they interweave falsehood with truth, where they are at a loss for something sweet. Now these two sorts of lies do no harm to those who believe them, because they are not deceived concerning any matter of religion and truth, or concerning any profit or advantage of their own. It suffices them, to judge the thing possible which is told, and to have faith in a man of whom they ought not rashly to think that he is telling a lie. For where is the harm of believing that such an one's father or grandfather was a good man, when he was not? or that he has served with the army even in Persia, though he never set foot out of Rome? But to the persons who tell these lies, they do much harm: to the former sort, because they so desert truth as to rejoice in deceit: to the latter, because they want to please people better than the truth.

19. These sorts of lies having been without any hesitation condemned, next follows a sort, as it were by steps rising to something better, which is commonly attributed to well-meaning and good people, when the person who lies not only does no harm to another, but even benefits somebody. Now it is on this sort of lies that the whole dispute turns, whether that person does harm to himself, who benefits another in such sort as to act contrary to the truth. Or, if that alone may be called truth which illustrateth the very minds of men with an intimate and incommutable light, at least he acts contrary to some true thing, because although the bodily senses are deceived, yet he acts contrary to a true thing who says that a thing is so or not so, whereof neither his mind nor senses nor his opinion or belief giveth him any report. Whether therefore he does not hurt himself in so profiting another, or in that compensation not hurt himself in which he profiteth the other, is a great question. If it be so, it should follow that he ought to profit himself by a lie which damages no man. But these things hang together, and if you concede that point, it necessarily draws in its train some very embarrassing consequences. For should it be asked, what harm it does to a person rolling in superfluous wealth, if from countless thousands of bushels

of wheat he lose one bushel, which bushel may be profitable as necessary food to the person stealing it; it will follow that theft also may be committed without blame, and false witness borne without sin. Than which, what can be mentioned more perverse? Or truly, if another had stolen the bushel, and thou sawest it done, and wert questioned, wouldest thou tell a lie with honesty for the poor man, and if thou do it for thine own poverty wilt thou be blamed? As if it were thy duty to love another more than thyself. Both then are disgraceful, and must be avoided.

20. But haply some may think that there is an exception to be added; that there be some honest lies which not only hurt no man, but profit some man, excepting those by which crimes are screened and defended: so that the reason why the aforesaid lie is disgraceful, is that, although it hurt no man, and profit the poor, it screens a theft; but if it should in such sort hurt nobody and profit somebody as not to screen and defend any sin, it would not be morally wrong. As, put the case that some one should in thy sight hide his money that he might not lose it by theft or violence, and thereupon being questioned thou shouldest tell a lie; thou wouldest hurt no man, and wouldest serve him who had need that his money were hidden, and wouldest not have covered a sin by telling a lie. For it is no sin if a man hide his property which he fears to lose. But, if we therefore sin not in telling a lie, for that, while covering no man's sin, we hurt nobody and do good to somebody, what are we about as concerning the sin itself of a lie? For where it is laid down, "Thou shalt not steal," there is also this, "Thou shalt not bear false witness." Since then each is severally prohibited, why is false witness culpable if it cover a theft or any other sin, but if without any screening of sin it be done by itself, then not culpable, whereas stealing is culpable in and by itself, and so other sins? Or is it so that to hide a sin is not lawful; to do it, lawful?

21. If this be absurd, what shall we say? Is it so, that there is no "false witness," but when one tells a lie either to invent a crime against some man, or to hide some man's crime, or in any way to oppress any man in judgment? For a witness seems to be necessary to the judge for cognizance of the cause. But if the Scripture named a "witness" only so far as that goes, the Apostle would not say, "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God;

because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up.” For so he shows that it is false witness to tell a lie, yea, in falsely praising a person.

Or peradventure, doth the person who lies then utter false witness when he either invents or hides any man’s sin, or hurts any man in whatever way? For, if a lie spoken against a man’s temporal life is detestable, how much more one against eternal life? as is every lie, if it take place in doctrine of religion. And it is for this reason that the Apostle calls it false witness, if a man tell a lie about Christ, yea, one which may seem to pertain to His praise. Now if it be a lie that neither inventeth or hideth any man’s sin, nor is answered to a question of the judge, and hurteth no man, and profits some man, are we to say that it is neither false witness, nor a reprehensible lie?

22. What then, if a homicide seek refuge with a Christian, or if he see where the homicide have taken refuge, and be questioned of this matter by him who seeks, in order to bring to punishment a man, the slayer of man? Is he to tell a lie? For how does he not hide a sin by lying, when he for whom he lies has been guilty of a heinous sin? Or is it because he is not questioned concerning his sin, but about the place where he is concealed? So then to lie in order to hide a person’s sin is evil; but to lie in order to hide the sinner is not evil? “Yea, surely:” says some one: “for a man sins not in avoiding punishment, but in doing something worthy of punishment. Moreover, it pertaineth to Christian discipline neither to despair of any man’s amendment, nor to bar against any man the way of repentance.” What if thou be led to the judge, and then questioned concerning the very place where the other is in hiding? Art thou prepared to say, either, “He is not there,” when thou knowest him to be there; or, “I know not, and have not seen,” what thou knowest and hast seen? Art thou then prepared to bear false witness, and to slay thy soul that a manslayer may not be slain? Or, up to the presence of the judge wilt thou lie, but when the judge questions thee, then speak truth that thou be not a false witness? So then thou art going to slay a man thyself by betraying him. Surely the betrayer too is one whom the divine Scripture detesteth. Or haply is he no betrayer, who in answer to the judge’s interrogation gives true information; but would be a betrayer, if, unasked, he should delate a man to his destruction? Put the case with



respect to a just and innocent man, that thou know where he is in hiding, and be questioned by the judge; which man, however, has been ordered to be taken to execution by a higher power, so that he who interrogates is charged with the execution of the law, not the author of the sentence? Will it be no false witness that thou shalt lie for an innocent man, because the interrogator is not a judge, but only charged with the execution? What if the author of the law interrogate thee, or any unjust judge, making quest of an innocent man to bring him to punishment? What wilt thou do? wilt thou be false witness, or betrayer? Or will he be a betrayer, who to a just judge shall ultroneously delate a lurking homicide; and he not so, who to an unjust judge, interrogating him of the hiding-place of an innocent man whom he seeks to slay, shall inform against the person who has thrown himself upon his honor? Or between the crime of false witness and that of betrayal, wilt thou remain doubtful and unable to make up thy mind? Or by holding thy peace or professing that thou wilt not tell, wilt thou make up thy mind to avoid both? Then why not do this before thou come to the judge, that thou mayest shun the lie also? For, having kept clear of a lie, thou wilt escape all false witness; whether every lie be false witness, or not every: but by keeping clear of all false witness in thy sense of the word, thou wilt not escape all lying. How much braver then, how much more excellent, to say, "I will neither betray nor lie?"

23. This did a former Bishop of the Church of Thagasta, Firmus by name, and even more firm in will. For, when he was asked by command of the emperor, through officers sent by him, for a man who was taking refuge with him, and whom he kept in hiding with all possible care, he made answer to their questions, that he could neither tell a lie, nor betray a man; and when he had suffered so many torments of body, (for as yet emperors were not Christian,) he stood firm in his purpose. Thereupon being brought before the emperor, his conduct appeared so admirable, that he without any difficulty obtained a pardon for the man whom he was trying to save. What conduct could be more brave and constant? But peradventure some more timid person may say, "I can be prepared to bear any torments, or even to submit to death, that I may not sin; but, since it is no sin to tell a lie such that you neither hurt any man, nor bear false witness, and benefit some man, it is foolish and a great sin, voluntarily and to no purpose to submit to

torments, and, when one's health and life may haply be useful, to fling them away for nothing to people in a rage." Of whom I ask; Why he fears that which is written, "Thou shall not bear false witness," and fears not that which is said unto God, "Thou wilt destroy all them that speak leasing?" Says he, "It is not written, Every lie: but I understand it as if it were written, Thou wilt destroy all that speak false witness." But neither there is it said, All false witness. "Yes, but it is set there," saith he, "where the other things are set down which are in every sort evil." What, is this the case with what is set down there, "Thou shalt not kill?" If this be in every sort evil, how shall one clear of this crime even just men, who, upon a law given, have killed many? "But," it is rejoined, "that man doth not himself kill, who is the minister of some just command." These men's fear, then, I do accept, that I still think that laudable man who would neither lie, nor betray a man, did both better understand that which is written, and what he understood did bravely put in practice.

24. But one sometimes comes to a case of this kind, that we are not interrogated where the person is who is sought, nor forced to betray him, if he is hidden in such manner, that he cannot easily be found unless betrayed: but we are asked, whether he be in such a place or not. If we know him to be there, by holding our peace we betray him, or even by saying that we will in no wise tell whether he be there or not: for from this the questioner gathers that he is there, as, if he were not, nothing else would be answered by him who would not lie nor betray a man, but only, that he is not there. So, by our either holding our peace, or saying such words, a man is betrayed, and he who seeks him hath but to enter in, if he have the power, and find him: whereas he might have been turned aside from finding him by our telling a lie. Wherefore if thou know not where he is, there is no cause for hiding the truth, but thou must confess that thou knowest not. But, if thou know where he is, whether he be in the place which is named in the question or elsewhere; thou must not say, when it is asked whether he be there or not, "I will not tell thee what thou askest," but thou must say, "I know where he is, but I will never show." For if, touching one place in particular thou answer not and profess that thou wilt not betray, it is just as if thou shouldest point to that same place with thy finger: for a sure suspicion is thereby excited. But if at the first thou confess that thou know

where he is, but will not tell, haply the inquisitor may be diverted from that place, and begin now to ply thee that the place where he is may be betrayed. For which good faith and humanity whatever thou shall bravely bear, is judged to be not only not culpable, but even laudable; save only these things which if a man suffer he is said to suffer not bravely, but immodestly and foully. For this is the last description of lie, concerning which we must treat more diligently.

25. For first to be eschewed is that capital lie and far to be fled from, which is done in doctrine of religion; to which lie a man ought by no consideration to be induced. The second, that he should hurt some man unjustly: which is such that it profits no man and hurts some man. The third, which so profits one as to hurt another, but not in corporal defilement. The fourth, that which is done through only lust of lying and deceiving, which is an unmixed lie. The fifth, what is done with desire of pleasing by agreeableness in talk. All these being utterly eschewed and rejected, there follows a sixth sort which at once hurts nobody and helps somebody; as when, if a person's money is to be unjustly taken from him, one who knows where the money is, should say that he does not know, by whomsoever the question be put. The seventh, which hurts none and profits some: except if a judge interrogate: as when, not wishing to betray a man who is sought for to be put to death, one should lie; not only a just and innocent, but also a culprit; because it belongs to Christian discipline neither to despair of any man's amendment, nor to bar the way of repentance against any. Of which two sorts, which are wont to be attended with great controversy, we have sufficiently treated, and have shown what was our judgment; that by taking the consequences, which are honorably and bravely borne, these kinds also should be eschewed by brave and faithful and truthful men and women. The eighth sort of lie is that which hurts no man, and does good in the preserving somebody from corporal defilement, at least that defilement which we have mentioned above. For even to eat with unwashen hands the Jews thought defilement. Or if a person think this also a defilement, yet not such that a lie ought to be told to avoid it. But if the lie be such as to do an injury to any man, even though it screen a man from that uncleanness which all men abhor and detest; whether a lie of this kind may be told provided the injury done by the lie be such as consists not in that sort of uncleanness with

which we are now concerned, is another question: for here the question is no longer about lying, but it is asked whether an injury ought to be done to any man, even otherwise than by a lie, that the said defilement may be warded off from another. Which I should by no means think: though the case proposed be the slightest wrongs, as that which I mentioned above, about a single measure of wheat; and though it be very embarrassing whether it be our duty not to do even such an injury to any man, if thereby another may be defended or screened from a lustful outrage upon his person. But, as I said, this is another question: at present let us go on with what we have taken in hand: whether a lie ought to be told, if even the inevitable condition be proposed that we either do this, or suffer the deed of lust or some execrable pollution; even though by lying we do no man harm.

26. Touching which matter, there will be some place open for consideration, if first the divine authorities which forbid a lie be diligently discussed: for if these give no place, we vainly seek a loophole; for we are bound to keep in every way the command of God, and the will of God in all that through keeping His command we may suffer, it is our duty with an even mind to follow: but if by some relaxation any outlet be allowed, in such a case we are not to decline a lie. The reason why the Divine Scriptures contain not only God's commands, but the life and character of the just, is this: that, if haply it be hidden in what way we are to take that which is enjoined, by the actions of the just it may be understood. With the exception, therefore, of those actions which one may refer to an allegorical significance, although none doubts that they really took place, as is the case with almost all the occurrences in the books of the Old Testament. For who can venture to affirm of any thing there, that it does not pertain to a figurative foretelling? Seeing the Apostle, speaking of the sons of Abraham, of whom of course it is most easily said that they were born and did live in the natural order of propagating the people, (for not monsters and prodigies were born, to lead the mind to some presignification,) nevertheless asserteth that they signify the two Testaments; and saith of that marvellous benefit which God bestowed upon His people Israel to rescue them out of the bondage in which they in Egypt were oppressed, and of the punishment which avenged their sin on their journey, that these things befell them in a figure: what actions wilt thou find, from which thou mayest set aside that rule, and take

upon thee to affirm that they are not to be reduced to some figure? Excepting therefore these, the things which in the New Testament are done by the Saints, where there is a most evident commending of manners to our imitation, may avail as examples for the understanding of the Scriptures, which things are digested in the commands.

27. As, when we read in the Gospel, “Thou hast received a blow in the face, make ready the other cheek.” Now as an example of patience can none be found than that of the Lord Himself more potent and excellent; but He, when smitten on the cheek, said not, Behold here is the other cheek, but He said, “If I have spoken ill, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?” Where He shows that the preparation of the other cheek is to be done in the heart. Which also the Apostle Paul knew, for he, too, when he was smitten on the face before the high priest, did not say, Smite the other cheek: but, “God,” saith he, “shall smite thee, thou whited wall: and sittest thou to judge me according to law, and contrary to law commandest me to be smitten?” with most deep insight beholding that the priesthood of the Jews was already become such, that in name it outwardly was clean and fair, but within was foul with muddy lusts; which priesthood he saw in spirit to be ready to pass away through vengeance of the Lord, when he spake those words: but yet he had his heart ready not only to receive other blows on the cheek, but also to suffer for the truth any torments whatever, with love of them from whom he should suffer the same.

28. It is also written, “But I say unto you, Swear not at all.” But the Apostle himself has used oaths in his Epistles. And so he shows how that is to be taken which is said, “I say unto you, Swear not at all:” that is, lest by swearing one come to a facility in swearing, from facility to a custom, and so from a custom there be a downfall into perjury. And therefore he is not found to have sworn except in writing, where there is more wary forethought, and no precipitate tongue withal. And this indeed came of evil, as it is said, “Whatever is more than these is of evil:” not however from evil of his own, but from the evil of infirmity which was in them, in whom he even in this way endeavored to work faith. For that he used an oath in speaking, while not writing, I know not that any Scripture has related concerning him. And yet the Lord says, “Swear not at all:” for He hath not

granted license thereof to persons writing. Howbeit, because to pronounce Paul guilty of violating the commandment, especially in Epistles written and sent forth for the spiritual life and salvation of the nations, were an impiety, we must understand that word which is set down, “At all,” to be set down for this purpose, that as much as in thee lies, thou affect not, love not, nor as though it were for a good thing, with any delight desire, an oath.

29. As that, “Take no thought for the morrow,” and, “Take therefore no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or what ye shall put on.” Now when we see that the Lord Himself had a bag in which was put what was given, that it might be kept for necessary uses as the time should require; and that the Apostles themselves made much provision for the indigence of the brethren, not only for the morrow, but even for the more protracted time of impending dearth, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles; it is sufficiently clear that these precepts are so to be understood, that we are to do nothing of our work as matter of necessity, through love of obtaining temporal things, or fear of want.

30. Moreover, it was said to the Apostles that they should take nothing with them for their journey, but should live by the Gospel. And in a certain place too the Lord Himself signified why He said this, when He added, “The laborer is worthy of his hire:” where He sufficiently shows that this is permitted, not ordered; lest haply he who should do this, namely, that in this work of preaching the word he should take aught for the uses of this life from them to whom he preached, should think he was doing any thing unlawful. And yet that it may more laudably not be done is sufficiently proved in the Apostle Paul: who, while he said, “Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him, that teacheth in all things,” and showed in many places that this is wholesomely done by them to whom he preached the word, “Nevertheless,” saith he, “I have not used this power.” The Lord, therefore, when He spake those words, gave power, not bound men by a command. So in general, what in words we are not able to understand, in the actions of the Saints we gather how it is meet to be taken, which would easily be drawn to the other side, unless it were recalled by an example.

31. Thus then what is written, “The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul;” of what mouth it speaketh, is the question. For in general when the Scripture

speaks of the mouth, it signifies the very seat of our conception in the heart, where is approved and decreed whatever also by the voice, when we speak the truth, is uttered: so that he lieth with the heart who approveth a lie; yet that man may possibly not lie with the heart, who uttereth other than is in his mind, in such sort that he knows it to be for the sake of avoiding a greater evil that he admitteth an evil, disapproving withal both the one and the other. And they who assert this, say that thus also is to be understood that which is written, "He that speaketh the truth in his heart:" because always in the heart truth must be spoken; but not always in the mouth of the body, if any cause of avoiding a greater evil require that other than is in the mind be uttered with the voice. And that there is indeed a mouth of the heart, may be understood even from this, that where there is speech, there a mouth is with no absurdity understood: nor would it be right to say, "Who speaketh in his heart," unless it were right to understand that there is also a mouth in the heart. Though in that very place where it is written, "The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul," if the context of the lesson be considered, it may peradventure be taken for no other than the mouth of the heart. For there is an obscure response there, where it is hidden from men, to whom the mouth of the heart, unless the mouth of the body sound therewith, is not audible. But that mouth, the Scripture in that place saith, doth reach to the hearing of the Spirit of the Lord, Who hath filled the whole earth; at the same time mentioning lips and voice and tongue in that place; yet all these the sense permitteth not to be taken, but concerning the heart, because it saith of the Lord, that what is spoken is not hidden from Him: now that which is spoken with that sound which reacheth to our ears, is not hidden from men either. Thus, namely, is it written: "The Spirit of wisdom is loving, and will not acquit an evil-speaker of his lips: for of his reins God is witness, and of his heart a true searcher, and of his tongue a hearer. For the Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole earth, and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice. Therefore he that speaketh unrighteous things cannot be hid: but neither shall the judgment when it punisheth pass by him. For in the thoughts of the ungodly shall there be interrogation; and the hearing of his words shall come from the Lord, to the punishment of his iniquities. For the ear of jealousy heareth all things, and the tumult of murmurings will not be hid. Therefore keep yourselves from murmuring, which profiteth nothing, and from backbiting

refrain your tongue: because an obscure response will not go into the void. But the mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul.” It seems then to threaten them who think that to be obscure and secret, which they agitate and turn over in their heart. And this, it would show, is so clear to the ears of God, that it even calls it “tumult.”

32. Manifestly also in the Gospel we find the mouth of the heart: so that in one place the Lord is found to have mentioned the mouth both of the body and of the heart, where he saith, “Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? but those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man.” Here if thou understand but one mouth, that of the body, how wilt thou understand, “Those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart;” since spitting also and vomiting proceed out of the mouth? Unless peradventure a man is but then defiled when he eateth aught unclean, but is defiled when he vomits it up. But if this be most absurd, it remains that we understand the mouth of the heart to have been expounded by the Lord, when He saith, “The things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart.” For being that theft also can be, and often is, perpetrated with silence of the bodily voice and mouth; one must be out of his mind so to understand it as then to account a person to be contaminated by the sin of theft, when he confesses or makes it known, but when he commits it and holds his peace, then to think him undefiled. But, in truth, if we refer what is said to the mouth of the heart, no sin whatever can be committed tacitly: for it is not committed unless it proceed from that mouth which is within.

33. But, like as it is asked of what mouth the Scripture saith, “The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul,” so it may be asked, of what lie. For it seems to speak of that lie in particular, which consists in detraction. It says, “Keep yourselves from murmuring, which profiteth nothing, and from detraction refrain your tongue.” Now this detraction takes place through malevolence, when any man not only with mouth and voice of the body doth utter what



he forgeth against any, but even without speaking wisheth him to be thought such; which is in truth to detract with the mouth of the heart; which thing, it saith, cannot be obscure and hidden from God.

34. For what is written in another place, “Wish not to use every lie;” they say is not of force for this, that a person is not to use any lie. Therefore, when one man shall say, that according to this testimony of Scripture we must to that degree hold every sort and kind of lie in detestation, that even if a man wish to lie, yea, though he lie not, the very wish is to be condemned; and to this sense interpreteth, that it is not said, Do not use every lie, but, “Do not wish to use every lie;” that one must not dare not only to tell, but not even to wish to tell, any lie whatever: saith another man, “Nay, in that it saith, Do not wish to use every lie, it willeth that from the mouth of the heart we exterminate and estrange lying: so that while from some lies we must abstain with the mouth of the body, as are those chiefly which pertain to doctrine of religion; from some, we are not to abstain with the mouth of the body, if reason of avoiding a greater evil require; but with the mouth of the heart we must abstain utterly from every lie.” Where it behoveth to be understood what is said, “Do not wish:” namely, the will itself is taken as it were the mouth of the heart, so that it concerneth not the mouth of the heart when in shunning a greater evil we lie unwillingly. There is also a third sense in which thou mayest so take this word, “not every,” that, except some lies, it giveth thee leave to lie. Like as if he should say, wish not to believe every man: he would not mean to advise that none should be believed; but that not all, some however, should be believed. And that which follows, “For assiduity thereof will not profit for good,” sounds as if, not lying, but assiduous lying, that is, the custom and love of lying, should seem to be that which he would prohibit. To which that person will assuredly slide down, who either shall think that every lie may be boldly used (for so he will shun not that even which is committed in the doctrine of piety and religion; than which what more abominably wicked thing canst thou easily find, not among all lies, but among all sins?) or to some lie (no matter how easy, how harmless,) shall accommodate the inclination of the will; so as to lie, not unwillingly for the sake of escaping a greater evil, but willingly and with liking. So, seeing there be three things which may be understood in this sentence, either “Every lie, not only tell thou not, but do

not even wish to tell:" or, "Do not wish, but even unwillingly tell a lie when aught worse is to be avoided:" or, "Not every," to wit, that except some lies, the rest are admitted: one of these is found to make for those who hold that one is never to lie, two for those who think that sometimes one may tell a lie. But yet what follows, "For assiduity thereof will not profit to good," I know not whether it can countenance the first sentence of these three; except haply so, that while it is a precept for the perfect not only not to lie, but not even to wish; assiduity of lying is not permitted even to beginners. As if, namely, on laying down the rule at no time whatever not merely to lie but so much as to have a wish to lie, and this being gainsaid by examples, in regard that there are some lies which have been even approved by great authority, it should be rejoined that those indeed are lies of beginners, which have, in regard of this life, some kind of duty of mercy; and yet to that degree is every lie evil, and by perfect and spiritual minds in every way to be eschewed, that not even beginners are permitted to have assiduous custom thereof. For we have already spoken concerning the Egyptian midwives, that it is in respect of the promise of growth and proficiency to better things that they while lying are spoken of with approval: because it is some step towards loving the true and eternal saving of the soul, when a person doth mercifully for the saving of any man's albeit mortal life even tell a lie.

35. Moreover what is written "Thou wilt destroy all that speak leasing:" one saith that no lie is here excepted, but all condemned. Another saith: Yea verily: but they who speak leasing from the heart, as we disputed above; for that man speaketh truth in his heart, who hateth the necessity of lying, which he understands as a penalty of the moral life. Another saith: All indeed will God destroy who speak leasing, but not all leasing: for there is some leasing which the Prophet was at that time insinuating, in which none is spared; that is, if refusing to confess each one his sins, he defend them rather, and will not do penance, so that not content to work iniquity, he must needs wish to be thought just, and succumb not to the medicine of confession: as the very distinction of the words may seem to intimate no other, "Thou hatest all that work iniquity;" but wilt not destroy them if upon repenting they speak the truth in confession, that by doing that truth they may come to the light; as is said in the Gospel according to John, "But be

that doeth truth cometh unto the light. Thou wilt destroy all who” not only work what Thou hatest, but also “speak leasing;” in holding out before them false righteousness, and not confessing their sins in penitence.

36. For, concerning false witness, which is set down in the ten commands of the Law, it can indeed in no wise be contended that love of truth may at heart be preserved, and false witness brought forth to him unto whom the witness is borne. For, when it is said to God only, then it is only in the heart that the truth is to be embraced: but when it is said to man, then must we with the mouth also of the body bring forth truth, because man is not an inspector of the heart. But then, touching the witness itself, it is not unreasonably asked, to whom one is a witness? For not to whomsoever we speak unto are we witnesses, but to them to whom it is expedient and due that they by our means should come to know or believe the truth; as is a judge, that he may not err in judging; or he who is taught in doctrine of religion, that he may not err in faith, or by very authority of the teacher waver in doubt. But when the person who interrogates thee or wishes to know aught from thee seeks that which concerneth him not, or which is not expedient for him to know, he craveth not a witness, but a betrayer. Therefore if to him thou tell a lie, from false witness peradventure thou wilt be clear, but from a lie assuredly not. So then with this salvo, that to bear false witness is never lawful, the question is, whether it be lawful sometimes to tell a lie. Or if it be false witness to lie at all, it is to be seen whether it admit of compensation, to wit, that it be said for the sake of avoiding a greater sin: as that which is written, “Honor father and mother,” under stress of a preferable duty is disregarded; whence the paying of the last honors of sepulture to a father, is forbidden to that man who by the Lord Himself is called to preach the kingdom of God.

37. Likewise, touching that which is written, “A son which receiveth the word shall be far from destruction: but receiving, he receiveth it for himself, and no falsehood proceedeth out of his mouth:” some one may say, that what is here set down, “A son which receiveth the word,” is to be taken for no other than the word of God, which is truth. Therefore, “A son receiving the truth shall be far from destruction,” refers to that which is written, “Thou wilt destroy all that speak leasing.” But when it follows, “Receiving

he receiveth for himself,” what other doth this insinuate than what the Apostle saith, “But let every man prove his own work, and then he shall have glorying in himself and not in another?” For he that receiveth the word, that is, truth, not for himself, but for men-pleasing, keepeth it not when he sees they can be pleased by a lie. But whoso receiveth it for himself, no falsehood proceedeth out of his mouth: because even when the way to please men is to lie, that man lieth not, who receiving the truth not thereby to please them but to please God, hath received it for himself. Therefore there is no reason why it should be said here He will destroy all who speak leasing, but not all leasing: because all lies, universally, are cut off in this saying, “And no falsehood proceedeth out of his mouth.” But another saith, it is to be so taken as the Apostle Paul took our Lord’s saying, “But I say unto you, Swear not at all.” For here also all swearing is cut off; but from the mouth of the heart, that it should never be done with approbation of the will, but through necessity of the weakness of another; that is, “from the evil” of another, when it shows that he cannot otherwise be got to believe what is said, unless faith be wrought by an oath; or, from that “evil” of our own, that while as yet involved in the skins of this mortality we are not able to show our heart: which thing were we able to do, of swearing there were no need. Though moreover in this whole sentence, if the saying, “A son receiving the word shall be far from destruction,” be said of none other than that Truth, by Whom all things were made, which remaineth ever incommutable; then, because the doctrine of Religion strives to bring men to the contemplation of this Truth, it may seem that the saying, “And no falsehood proceedeth out of his mouth,” is said to this purpose, that he speaketh no falsehood that pertaineth to doctrine. Which sort of lie is upon no compensation whatever to be gone into, and is utterly and before all to be eschewed. Or if the saying, “No falsehood,” is absurdly taken if it be not referred to every lie, the saying, “From his mouth,” should, as was argued above, be taken to mean the mouth of the heart, in the opinion of him who accounts that sometimes one may tell a lie.

38. Certain it is, albeit all this disputation go from side to side, some asserting that it is never right to lie, and to this effect reciting divine testimonies: others gainsaying, and even in the midst of the very words of

the divine testimonies seeking place for a lie; yet no man can say, that he finds this either in example or in word of the Scriptures, that any lie should seem a thing to be loved, or not had in hatred; howbeit sometimes by telling a lie thou must do that thou hatest, that what is more greatly to be detested may be avoided. But then here it is that people err; they put the precious beneath the vile. For when thou hast granted that some evil is to be admitted, that another and more grievous may not be admitted; not by the rule of truth, but by his own cupidity and custom doth each measure the evil, accounting that to be the more grievous, which himself more greatly dreads, not which is in reality more greatly to be fled from. All this fault is engendered by perversity of loving. For being there are two lives of ours; the one eternal, which is promised of God; the other temporal, in which we now are: when a man shall have begun to love this temporal more than that eternal, for the sake of this which he loveth he thinks all things right to be done; and there are not any, in his estimation, more grievous sins than those which do injury to this life, and either take away from it any commodity unjustly and unlawfully, or by inflicting of death take it utterly away. And so thieves, and robbers, and ruffians, and torturers, and slayers, are more hated of them than lascivious, drunken, luxurious men, if these molest no man. For they do not understand or at all care, that these do wrong to God; not indeed to any inconvenience of Him, but to their own pernicious hurt; seeing they corrupt His gifts bestowed upon them, even His temporal gifts, and by their very corruptions turn away from eternal gifts: above all, if they have already begun to be the Temple of God; which to all Christians the Apostle saith thus: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? Whoso shall corrupt God’s temple, God will corrupt him. For the temple of God is holy: which temple are ye.”

39. And all these sins, truly, whether such whereby an injury is done to men in the comforts of this life, or whereby men corrupt themselves and hurt none against his will: all these sins, then, even though they seem to mean well by this temporal life to the procuring of any delight or profit, (for no man commits any of these things with any other purpose and end;) yet in regard of that life which is forever and ever, they do entangle and in all ways hinder. But there are some of these that hinder the doers only, others likewise those on whom they are done. For as to the things which people

keep safe for the sake of utility to this life, when these are taken away by injurious persons, they alone sin and are hindered from eternal life who do this, not they to whom they do it. Therefore, even if a person consent to the taking of them from him, either that he may not do some evil, or that he may not in these very things suffer some greater inconvenience; not only does he not sin, but in the one case he acts bravely and laudably, in the other usefully and unblameably. But as to those things which are kept for the sake of sanctity and religion, when injurious persons wish to violate these, it is right, if the condition be proposed and the means given, to redeem them even by sins of lesser moment, yet not by wrongs to other men. And then do these things thenceforth cease to be sins, which are undertaken in order to the avoidance of greater sins. For as in things useful, for instance in pecuniary or any other corporal commodity, that is not called a loss which is parted with in order to a greater gain; so in things holy, that is not called sin which is admitted lest a worse be admitted. Or if that is called loss, which one foregoes that he may not forego more; let this also be called sin, while however the necessity of undertaking it in order to the eschewing of a greater is no more to be doubted, than that, in order to avoid a greater loss, it is right to suffer a smaller one.

40. Now the things which are to be kept safe for sanctity's sake are these: pudicity of body, and chastity of soul, and verity of doctrine. Pudicity of body, without consent and permission of the soul, doth no man violate. For, whatever against our will and without our empowering the same is by greater force done upon our body, is no lewdness. Howbeit, of permitting there may be some reason, but of consenting, none. For we consent, when we approve and wish: but we permit even not willing, because of some greater turpitude to be eschewed. Consent, truly, to corporal lewdness violates also chastity of mind. For the mind's chastity consists in a good will and sincere love, which is not corrupted, unless when we love and desire that which Truth teaches ought not to be loved and desired. We have therefore to guard the sincerity of love toward God and our neighbor; for in this is chastity of mind sanctified: and we must endeavor with all the strength in our power, and with pious supplication, that, when the pudicity of our body is sought to be violated, not even that outermost sense of the soul, which is entangled with the flesh, may be touched with any delight;

but if it cannot this, at least the mind and thought in not consenting may have its chastity preserved entire. Now what we have to guard in chastity of mind, is, as pertaining to the love of our neighbor, innocence and benevolence; as pertaining to the love of God, piety. Innocence is that we hurt no man; benevolence, that we also do good to whom we can; piety, that we worship God. But as for verity of doctrine, of religion and piety, that is not violated unless by a lie; whereas the highest and inmost Verity Itself, Whose that doctrine is, can in no wise be violated: which Truth to attain unto, and in It on every wise to remain, and to It thoroughly to cleave, will not be permitted, but when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. But, because all piety in this life is practice by which we tend to that life, which practice hath a guidance afforded unto it from that doctrine, which in human words and signs of corporal sacraments doth insinuate and intimate Truth herself: for this cause this also, which by lying is possible to be corrupted, is most of all to be kept incorrupt; that so, if aught in that chastity of mind be violated, it may have that wherefrom it may be repaired. For once corrupt authority of doctrine, and there can be none either course or recourse to chastity of mind.

41. There resulteth then from all these this sentence, that a lie which doth not violate the doctrine of piety, nor piety itself, nor innocence, nor benevolence, may on behalf of pudicity of body be admitted. And yet if any man should propose to himself so to love truth, not only that which consists in contemplation, but also in uttering the true thing, which each in its own kind of things is true, and no otherwise to bring forth with the mouth of the body his thought than in the mind it is conceived and beheld; so that he should prize the beauty of truth-telling honesty, not only above gold and silver and jewels and pleasant lands, but above this temporal life itself altogether and every good thing of the body, I know not whether any could wisely say that that man errs. And if he should prefer this and prize it more than all that himself hath of such things; rightly also would he prefer it to the temporal things of other men, whom by his innocence and benevolence he was bound to keep and to help. For he would love perfect faith, not only of believing aright those things which by an excellent authority and worthy of faith should to himself be spoken, but also of faithfully uttering what himself should judge right to be spoken, and should speak. For faith hath its

name in the Latin tongue, from that the thing is done which is said: and thus it is manifest that one doth not exhibit when telling a lie. And even if this faith be less violated, when one lies in such sort that he is believed to no inconvenience and no pernicious hurt, with added intention moreover of guarding either one's life or corporal purity; yet violated it is, and a thing is violated which ought to be kept safe in chastity and sanctity of mind. Whence we are constrained, not by opinion of men, which for the most part is in error, but by truth itself, truth which is eminent above all, and alone is most invincible, to prefer even to purity of body, perfect faith. For chastity of mind is, love well ordered, which does not place the greater below the smaller. Now it is less, whatever in the body than whatever in the mind can be violated. For assuredly when for corporal chasteness a man tells a lie, he sees indeed that his body is threatened with corruption, not from his own, but from another's lust, but is cautious lest by permitting at least, he be a party. That permission, however, where is it but in the mind? So then, even corporal chasteness cannot be corrupted but in the mind; which not consenting nor permitting, it can by no means be rightly said that corporal chasteness is violated whatever in the body be perpetrated by another's lust. Whence it is gathered, that much more must the chastity of the mind be preserved in the mind, in the which is the guardianship of the pudicity of the body. Wherefore, what in us lies, both the one and the other must by holy manners and conversation be walled and hedged round, lest from another quarter it be violated. But when both cannot be, which is to be slighted in comparison of which, who doth not see? when he seeth which to which is to be preferred, the mind to the body, or the body to the mind; and which is more to be shunned among sins, the permitting of another's deed, or the committing of the deed thyself.

42. It clearly appears then, all being discussed, that those testimonies of Scripture have none other meaning than that we must never at all tell a lie: seeing that not any examples of lies, worthy of imitation, are found in the manners and actions of the Saints, as regards those Scriptures which are referred to no figurative signification, such as is the history in the Acts of the Apostles. For all those sayings of our Lord in the Gospel, which to more ignorant minds seem lies, are figurative significations. And as to what the Apostle says: "I am made all things to all men, that I might gain all;" the



right understanding is, that he did this not by lying, but by sympathy; so that he dealt with them in liberating them with so great charity, as if he were himself in that evil from which he wished to make them whole. There must therefore be no lying in the doctrine of piety: it is a heinous wickedness, and the first sort of detestable lie. There must be no lying of the second sort; because no man must have a wrong done to him. There must be no lying of the third sort; because we are not to consult any man's good to the injury of another. There must be no lying of the fourth sort, that is, for the lust of lying, which of itself is vicious. There must be no lying of the fifth sort, because not even the truth itself is to be uttered with the aim of men-pleasing, how much less a lie, which of itself, as a lie, is a foul thing? There must be no lying of the sixth sort; for it is not right that even the truth of testimony be corrupted for any man's temporal convenience and safety. But unto eternal salvation none is to be led by aid of a lie. For not by the ill manners of them that convert him is he to be converted to good manners: because if it is meet to be done towards him, himself also ought when converted to do it toward others; and so is he converted not to good, but to ill manners, seeing that is held out to be imitated by him when converted, which was done unto him in converting him. Neither in the seventh sort must there be any lying; for it is meet that not any man's commodity or temporal welfare be preferred to the perfecting of faith. Not even if any man is so ill moved by our right deeds as to become worse in his mind, and far more remote from piety, are right deeds therefore to be foregone: since what we are chiefly to hold is that whereunto we ought to call and invite them whom as our own selves we love; and with most courageous mind we must drink in that apostolic sentence: "To some we are a savor of life unto life, to others a savor of death unto death; and who is sufficient for these things?" Nor in the eighth sort must there be lying: because both among good things chastity of mind is greater than pudicity of body; and among evil things, that which ourselves do, than that which we suffer to be done. In these eight kinds, however, a man sins less when he tells a lie, in proportion as he emerges to the eighth: more, in proportion as he diverges to the first. But whoso shall think there is any sort of lie that is not sin, will deceive himself foully, while he deems himself honest as a deceiver of other men.

43. So great blindness, moreover, hath occupied men's minds, that to them it is too little if we pronounce some lies not to be sins; but they must needs pronounce it to be sin in some things if we refuse to lie: and to such a pass have they been brought by defending lying, that even that first kind which is of all the most abominably wicked they pronounce to have been used by the Apostle Paul. For in the Epistle to the Galatians, written as it was, like the rest, for doctrine of religion and piety, they say that he has told a lie, in the passage where he says concerning Peter and Barnabas, "When I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel." For, while they wish to defend Peter from error, and from that pravity of way into which he had fallen; the very way of religion in which is salvation for all men, they by breaking and mincing the authority of the Scriptures do endeavor themselves to overthrow. In which they do not see that it is not only lying, but perjury that they lay to the charge of the Apostle in the very doctrine of piety, that is, in an Epistle in which he preaches the Gospel; seeing that he there saith, before he relates that matter, "What I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not." But it is time that we set bounds to this disputation: in the consideration and treatment whereof altogether there is nothing more meet to be, before all else, borne in mind and made our prayer, than that which the same Apostle saith: "God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear, but will with the temptation make also a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

# ON MARRIAGE AND CONCUPISCENCE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

(DE NUPTIIS ET CONCUPISCENTIA.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN'S "RETRACTATIONS,"

IN TWO BOOKS,

ADDRESSED TO THE COUNT VALERIUS

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

WRITTEN IN 419 AND 420.

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

# CONTENTS

## ON MARRIAGE AND CONCUPISCENCE

Book II. Chap. 53, On the Following Treatise, “De nuptiis et concupiscentia.”

Advertisement To The Reader On The Following Treatise

A Letter Addressed to the Count Valerius

On Marriage And Concupiscence

### Book I

Chapter 1

Concerning the Argument of This Treatise

Chapter 2. [II.]

Why This Treatise Was Addressed to Valerius

Chapter 3 [III.]

Conjugal Chastity the Gift of God

Chapter 4

A Difficulty as Regards the Chastity of Unbelievers. None But a Believer is Truly a Chaste Man

Chapter 5 [IV.]

The Natural Good of Marriage. All Society Naturally Repudiates a Fraudulent Companion. What is True Conjugal Purity? No True Virginity and Chastity Except in Devotion to True Faith

Chapter 6 [V.]

The Censuring of Lust is Not a Condemnation of Marriage; Whence Comes Shame in the Human Body. Adam and Eve Were Not Created Blind; Meaning of Their “Eyes Being Opened.”

Chapter 7 [VI.]

Man’s Disobedience Justly Required in the Rebellion of His Own Flesh; The Blush of Shame for the Disobedient Members of the Body.

Chapter 8 [VII.]

The Evil of Lust Does Not Take Away the Good of Marriage

Chapter 9 [VIII.]

This Disease of Concupiscence in Marriage is Not to Be a Matter of Will, But of Necessity; What Ought to Be the Will of Believers in the Use of Matrimony; Who is to Be Regarded as Using, and

Not Succumbing To, the Evil of Concupiscence; How the Holy Fathers of the Old Testament Formerly Used Wives

Chapter 10 [IX.]

Why It Was Sometimes Permitted that a Man Should Have Several Wives, Yet No Woman Was Ever Allowed to Have More Than One Husband. Nature Prefers Singleness in Her Dominations

Chapter 11 [X.]

The Sacrament of Marriage; Marriage Indissoluble; The World's Law About Divorce Different from the Gospel's

Chapter 12 [XI.]

Marriage Does Not Cancel a Mutual Vow of Continence; There Was True Wedlock Between Mary and Joseph; In What Way Joseph Was the Father of Christ

Chapter 13

In the Marriage of Mary and Joseph There Were All the Blessings of the Wedded State; All that is Born of Concubinage is Sinful Flesh

Chapter 14 [XIII.]

Before Christ It Was a Time for Marrying; Since Christ It Has Been a Time for Continence

Chapter 15

The Teaching of the Apostle on This Subject

Chapter 16 [XIV.]

A Certain Degree of Intemperance is to Be Tolerated in the Case of Married Persons; The Use of Matrimony for the Mere Pleasure of Lust is Not Without Sin, But Because of the Nuptial Relation the Sin is Venial

Chapter 17 [XV.]

What is Sinless in the Use of Matrimony? What is Attended With Venial Sin, and What with Mortal?

Chapter 18 [XVI.]

Continence Better Than Marriage; But Marriage Better Than Fornication

Chapter 19 [XVII.]

Blessing of Matrimony.

Chapter 20 [XVIII]

Why Children of Wrath are Born of Holy Matrimony.

Chapter 21 [XIX.]

Thus Sinners are Born of Righteous Parents, Even as Wild Olives Spring from the Olive

Chapter 22 [XX.]

Even Infants, When Unbaptized, are in the Power of the Devil; Exorcism in the Case of Infants, and Renunciation of the Devil

Chapter 23 [XXI.]

Sin Has Not Arisen Out of the Goodness of Marriage; The Sacrament of Matrimony a Great One in the Case of Christ and the Church—A Very Small One in the Case of a Man and His Wife

Chapter 24

Lust and Shame Come from Sin; The Law of Sin; The Shamelessness of the Cynics

Chapter 25 [XXIII.]

Concupiscence in the Regenerate Without Consent is Not Sin; In What Sense Concupiscence is Called Sin

Chapter 26

Whatever is Born Through Concupiscence is Not Undeservedly in Subjection to the Devil by Reason of Sin; The Devil Deserves Heavier Punishment Than Men

Chapter 27 [XXIV.]

Through Lust Original Sin is Transmitted; Venial Sins in Married Persons; Concupiscence of the Flesh, the Daughter and Mother of Sin

Chapter 28 [XXV.]

Concupiscence Remains After Baptism, Just as Languor Does After Recovery from Disease; Concupiscence is Diminished in Persons of Advancing Years, and Increased in the Incontinent

Chapter 29 [XXVI.]

How Concupiscence Remains in the Baptized in Act, When It Has Passed Away as to Its Guilt

Chapter 30 [XXVII.]

The Evil Desires of Concupiscence; We Ought to Wish that They May Not Be

Chapter 31 [XXVIII.]

Who is the Man that Can Say, “It is No More I that Do It”?

Chapter 32

When Good Will Be Perfectly Done

Chapter 33 [XXX.]

True Freedom Comes with Willing Delight in God’s Law

Chapter 34

How Concupiscence Made a Captive of the Apostle; What the Law of Sin Was to the Apostle

Chapter 35 [XXXI.]

The Flesh, Carnal Affection

Chapter 36

Even Now While We Still Have Concupiscence We May Be Safe in Christ

Chapter 37 [XXXII.]

The Law of Sin with Its Guilt in Unbaptized Infants. By Adam’s Sin the Human Race Has Become a “Wild Olive Tree.”

Chapter 38 [XXXIII.]

To Baptism Must Be Referred All Remission of Sins, and the Complete Healing of the Resurrection. Daily Cleansing

Chapter 39 [XXXIV.]

By the Holiness of Baptism, Not Sins Only, But All Evils Whatsoever, Have to Be Removed. The Church is Not Yet Free from All Stain

Chapter 40 [XXXV.]

Refutation of the Pelagians by the Authority of St. Ambrose, Whom They Quote to Show that the Desire of the Flesh is a Natural Good

Preliminary Notes On The Second Book

Book II

Chapter 1 [I.]

Introductory Statement

Chapter 2 [II.]

In This and the Four Next Chapters He Adduces the Garbled Extracts He Has to Consider

Chapter 3

The Same Continued

Chapter 4

The Same Continued

Chapter 5

The Same Continued

Chapter 6

The Same Continued

Chapter 7 [III.]

Augustin Adduces a Passage Selected from the Preface of Julianus. (See “The Unfinished Work,” i. 73.)

Chapter 8

Augustin Refutes the Passage Adduced Above

Chapter 9

The Catholics Maintain the Doctrine of Original Sin, and Thus are Far from Being Manicheans

Chapter 10 [IV.]

In What Manner the Adversary’s Cavils Must Be Refuted

Chapter 11

The Devil the Author, Not of Nature, But Only of Sin

Chapter 12

Eve’s Name Means Life, and is a Great Sacrament of the Church

Chapter 13

The Pelagian Argument to Show that the Devil Has No Rights in the Fruits of Marriage

Chapter 14 [V.]

Concupiscence Alone, in Marriage, is Not of God

Chapter 15

Man, by Birth, is Placed Under the Dominion of the Devil Through Sin; We Were All One in Adam When He Sinned

Chapter 16 [VI.]

It is Not of Us, But Our Sins, that the Devil is the Author

Chapter 17 [VII.]

The Pelagians are Not Ashamed to Eulogize Concupiscence, Although They are Ashamed to Mention Its Name

Chapter 18

The Same Continued

Chapter 19 [VIII.]

The Pelagians Misunderstand “Seed” In Scripture

Chapter 20

Original Sin is Derived from the Faulty Condition of Human Seed

Chapter 21 [IX.]

It is the Good God That Gives Fruitfulness, and the Devil That Corrupts the Fruit

Chapter 22

Shall We Be Ashamed of What We Do, or of What God Does?

Chapter 23 [X.]

The Pelagians Affirm that God in the Case of Abraham and Sarah Aroused Concupiscence as a Gift from Heaven

Chapter 24 [XI.]

What Covenant of God the New-Born Babe Breaks. What Was the Value of Circumcision

Chapter 25 [XII.]

Augustin Not the Deviser of Original Sin

Chapter 26 [XIII.]

The Child in No Sense Formed by Concupiscence

Chapter 27

The Pelagians Argue that God Sometimes Closes the Womb in Anger, and Opens It When Appeased

Chapter 28 [XIV.]

Augustin’s Answer to This Argument. Its Dealing with Scripture



Chapter 29

The Same Continued. Augustin Also Asserts that God Forms Man at Birth

Chapter 30 [XV.]

The Case of Abimelech and His House Examined

Chapter 31 [XVI.]

Why God Proceeds to Create Human Beings, Who He Knows Will Be Born in Sin

Chapter 32 [XVII.]

God Not the Author of the Evil in Those Whom He Creates

Chapter 33 [XVIII.]

Though God Makes Us, We Perish Unless He Re-makes Us in Christ

Chapter 34 [XIX.]

The Pelagians Argue that Cohabitation Rightly Used is a Good, and What is Born from It is Good

Chapter 35 [XX.]

He Answers the Arguments of Julianus. What is the Natural Use of the Woman? What is the Unnatural Use?

Chapter 36 [XXI.]

God Made Nature Good: the Saviour Restores It When Corrupted

Chapter 37 [XXII.]

If There is No Marriage Without Cohabitation, So There is No Cohabitation Without Shame

Chapter 38 [XXIII.]

Jovinian Used Formerly to Call Catholics Manicheans; The Arians Also Used to Call Catholics Sabellians

Chapter 39 [XXIV.]

Man Born of Whatever Parentage is Sinful and Capable of Redemption

Chapter 40 [XXV.]

Augustin Declines the Dilemma Offered Him

Chapter 41 [XXVI.]

The Pelagians Argue that Original Sin Cannot Come Through Marriage If Marriage is Good

Chapter 42

The Pelagians Try to Get Rid of Original Sin by Their Praise of God's Works; Marriage, in Its Nature and by Its Institution, is Not the Cause of Sin

Chapter 43

The Good Tree in the Gospel that Cannot Bring Forth Evil Fruit, Does Not Mean Marriage

Chapter 44 [XXVII.]

The Pelagians Argue that If Sin Comes by Birth, All Married People Deserve Condemnation

Chapter 45

Answer to This Argument: The Apostle Says We All Sinned in One

Chapter 46

The Reign of Death, What It Is; The Figure of the Future Adam; How All Men are Justified Through Christ

Chapter 47

The Scriptures Repeatedly Teach Us that All Sin in One

Chapter 48

Original Sin Arose from Adam's Depraved Will. Whence the Corrupt Will Sprang

Chapter 49 [XXIX.]

In Infants Nature is of God, and the Corruption of Nature of the Devil

Chapter 50

The Rise and Origin of Evil. The Exorcism and Exsufflation of Infants, a Primitive Christian Rite

Chapter 51

To Call Those that Teach Original Sin Manicheans is to Accuse Ambrose, Cyprian, and the Whole Church

Chapter 52 [XXX.]

Sin Was the Origin of All Shameful Concupiscence

Chapter 53 [XXXI.]

Concupiscence Need Not Have Been Necessary for Fruitfulness

Chapter 54 [XXXII.]

How Marriage is Now Different Since the Existence of Sin

Chapter 55 [XXXIII.]

Lust is a Disease; The Word "Passion" In the Ecclesiastical Sense

Chapter 56

The Pelagians Allow that Christ Died Even for Infants; Julianus Slays Himself with His Own Sword

Chapter 57 [XXXIV.]

The Great Sin of the First Man

Chapter 58

Adam's Sin is Derived from Him to Every One Who is Born Even of Regenerate Parents; The Example of the Olive Tree and the Wild Olive

Chapter 59 [XXXV.]

The Pelagians Can Hardly Venture to Place Concupiscence in Paradise Before the Commission of Sin

## Chapter 60

Let Not the Pelagians Indulge Themselves in a Cruel Defence of Infants

## Book II. Chap. 53, On the Following Treatise, “De nuptiis et concupiscentia.”

“I Addressed two books to the Illustrious Count Valerius, upon hearing that the Pelagians had brought sundry vague charges upon us—how, for instance, we condemned marriage by maintaining Original Sin. These books are entitled, On Marriage and Concupiscence. We maintain that marriage is good; and that it must not be supposed that the concupiscence of the flesh, or “the law in our members which wars against the law of mind,” is a fault of marriage. Conjugal chastity makes a good use of the evil of concupiscence in the procreation of children. My first treatise contained two books. The first of them found its way into the hands of Julianus the Pelagian, who wrote four books in opposition to it. Out of these, somebody extracted sundry passages, and sent them to Count Valerius; he handed them to us, and after I had received them I wrote a second book in answer to these extracts. The first book of this work of mine opens with these words: “Our new heretics, most beloved son Valerius,” while the second begins thus: “Amid the cares of your duty as a soldier.”

### ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER ON THE FOLLOWING TREATISE

On revising these two Books, which he addressed to the Count Valerius, Augustin placed them immediately after his reply to the discourse of the Arians, which was affixed to the Proceedings with Emeritus. Now these proceedings are stated to have taken place on the 20th of September, in the year of our Lord 418. There can be no doubt, then, that these subjoined books—or, at any rate, the former of them—were written either at the close of the year 418, or in the beginning of the year 419. For, concerning this first book, Augustin says himself: “This book of mine, however, which he [Julianus] says he answered in four books, I wrote after the condemnation of Pelagius and Coelestius. This,” he adds, “I have deemed it right to

mention, because he declares that my words had been used by the enemies of the truth to bring it into odium. Let no one, therefore, suppose that it was owing to this book of mine that condemnation had been passed on the new heretics who are enemies of the grace of Christ.” From these words one may see at once that this first book was published about the same time as the condemnation of the Pelagians in the year 418.

Soon after its publication it began to be assailed by the Pelagians, who observed that its perusal was producing in the minds of the catholics much odium against their heresy. One of them, Julianus, influenced with a warm desire of furthering the heretical movement, attacked the first book of Augustin’s treatise in four books of his own. Out of these, sundry extracts were culled by some interested person, and forwarded to Count Valerius. Valerius despatched them from Ravenna to Rome, to Alypius, in order that he, on returning to Africa, might hand them to Augustin for the purpose of an early refutation, together with a letter in which Valerius thanked Augustin for the previous work which he also mentioned. Augustin saw at once that these extracts had been taken out of the work of Julianus; and, although he preferred reserving his answer to the selections till he had received the entire work from which they were culled, he still thought that he was bound to avoid all delay in satisfying the Count Valerius. Without loss of time, therefore, he drew up in answer his second book, with the same title as before, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, which, as we think, must be assigned to the year 420, since the holy doctor wrote it immediately after the expression of thanks for the first book; for it is clearly improbable that Valerius should have waited two years or more to make the acknowledgment of his gratitude.

Moreover, the Valerius whom Augustin dignifies with the title of *Illustrious* as well as *Count*, was much employed in public life—not, to be sure, in the forum, but in the field; and from this circumstance we find it difficult to accede to the opinion that supposes him to have been the same person with the Valerius who was *Count of the Private Estate* in the year 425, *Consul* in 432, and lastly *Master of the Offices* under Theodosius the younger in the year 434. These appointments, indeed, had no connection with military

service, nor had the prefects of Theodosius anything in common with those of Honorius.

#### A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE COUNT VALERIUS

On Augustin's forwarding to him what he calls his first book "on marriage and concupiscence."

To the illustrious and deservedly eminent Lord and his most dearly beloved son in the love of Christ, Valerius, Augustin sends greeting in the Lord.

1. While I was chafing at the long disappointment of receiving no acknowledgments from your Highness of the many letters which I had written to you, I all at once received three letters from your Grace,—one by the hand of my fellow bishop Vindemialis, which was not meant for me only, and two, soon afterwards, through my brother presbyter Firmus. This holy man, who is bound to me, as you may have ascertained from his own lips, by the ties of a most intimate love, had much conversation with me about your excellence, and gave me undoubted proofs of his complete knowledge of your character "in the bowels of Christ;" by these means he had sight, not only of the letters of which the fore-mentioned bishop and he himself had been the bearers, but also of those which we expressed our disappointment at not having received. Now his information respecting you was all the more pleasant to us, inasmuch as he gave me to understand, what it was out of your power to do, that you would not, even at my earnest request for an answer, become the extoller of your own praises, contrary to the permission of Holy Scripture. But I ought myself to hesitate to write to you in this strain, lest I should incur the suspicion of flattering you, my illustrious and deservedly eminent lord and dearly beloved son in the love of Christ.

2. Now, as to your praises in Christ, or rather Christ's praises in you, see what delight and joy it was to me to hear of them from him, who could neither deceive me because of his fidelity to me, nor be ignorant of them by reason of his friendship with you. But other testimony, which though inferior in amount and certainty has still reached my ear from divers quarters, assures me how sound and catholic is your faith; how devout your

hope of the future; how great your love to God and the brethren; how humble your mind amid the highest honours, as you do not trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, and art rich in good works; how your house is a rest and comfort of the saints, and a terror to evil-doers; how great is your care that no man lay snares for Christ's members (either among His old enemies or those of more recent days), although he use Christ's name as a cloak for his wiles; and at the same time, though you give no quarter to the error of these enemies, how provident you are to secure their salvation. This and the like, we frequently hear, as I have already said, even from others; but at the present moment we have, by means of the above-mentioned brother, received a fuller and more trustworthy knowledge.

3. Touching, however, the subject of conjugal purity, that we might be able to bestow our commendation and love upon you for it, could we possibly listen to the information of any one but some bosom friend of your own, who had no mere superficial acquaintance with you, but knew your innermost life? Concerning, therefore, this excellent gift of God to you, I am delighted to converse with you with more frankness and at greater length. I am quite sure that I shall not prove burdensome to you, even if I send you a prolix treatise, the perusal of which will only ensure a longer converse between us. For this have I discovered, that amidst your manifold and weighty cares you pursue your reading with ease and pleasure; and that you take great delight in any little performances of ours, even if they are addressed to other persons, whenever they have chanced to fall into your hands. Whatever, therefore, is addressed to yourself, in which I can speak to you as it were personally, you will deign both to notice with greater attention, and to receive with a higher pleasure. From the perusal, then, of this letter, turn to the book which I send with it. It will in its very commencement, in a more convenient manner, intimate to your Reverence the reason, both why it has been written, and why it has been submitted specially to your consideration.

ON MARRIAGE AND CONCUPISCENCE

# Book I

Wherein He expounds the peculiar and natural blessings of marriage. He shows that among these blessings must not be reckoned fleshly concupiscence; insomuch as this is wholly evil, such as does not proceed from the very nature of marriage, but is an accident thereof arising from original sin. This evil, notwithstanding, is rightly employed by marriage for the procreation of children. But, as the result of this concupiscence, it comes to pass that, even from the lawful marriage of the children of God, men are not born children of God, but of the world, and are bound with the chain of sin, although their parents have been liberated therefrom by grace; and are led captive by the devil, if they be not in like manner rescued by the self-same grace of Christ. He explains how it is that concupiscence remains in the baptized in act though not in guilt. He teaches, that by the sanctity of baptism, not merely this original guilt, but all other sins of men whatever, are taken away. He lastly quotes the authority of Ambrose to show that the evil of concupiscence must be distinguished from the good of marriage.

## CHAPTER 1

### CONCERNING THE ARGUMENT OF THIS TREATISE

Our new heretics, my dearest son Valerius, who maintain that infants born in the flesh have no need of that medicine of Christ whereby sins are healed, are constantly affirming, in their excessive hatred of us, that we condemn marriage and that divine procedure by which God creates human beings by means of men and women, inasmuch as we assert that they who are born of such a union contract that original sin of which the apostle says, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned;” and because we do not deny, that of whatever kind of parents they are born, they are still under the devil’s dominion, unless they be born again in Christ, and by His grace be



removed from the power of darkness and translated into His kingdom, who willed not to be born from the same union of the two sexes. Because, then, we affirm this doctrine, which is contained in the oldest and unvarying rule of the catholic faith, these propounders of the novel and perverse dogma, who assert that there is no sin in infants to be washed away in the laver of regeneration, in their unbelief or ignorance calumniate us, as if we condemned marriage, and as if we asserted to be the devil's work what is God's own work—the human being which is born of marriage. Nor do they reflect that the good of marriage is no more impeachable on account of the original evil which is derived therefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication is excusable on account of the natural good which is born of them. For as sin is the work of the devil, from whencesoever contracted by infants; so man is the work of God, from whencesoever born. Our purpose, therefore, in this book, so far as the Lord vouchsafes us in His help, is to distinguish between the evil of carnal concupiscence from which man who is born therefrom contracts original sin, and the good of marriage. For there would have been none of this shame-producing concupiscence, which is impudently praised by impudent men, if man had not previously sinned; while as to marriage, it would still have existed even if no man had sinned, since the procreation of children in the body that belonged to that life would have been effected without that malady which in “the body of this death” cannot be separated from the process of procreation.

## CHAPTER 2. [II.]

### WHY THIS TREATISE WAS ADDRESSED TO VALERIUS

Now there are three very special reasons, which I will briefly indicate, why I wished to write to you particularly on this subject. One is, because by the gift of Christ you are a strict observer of conjugal chastity. Another is, because by your great care and diligence you have effectually withstood those profane novelties which we are resisting in our present discussion. The third is, because of my learning that something which they had committed to writing had found its way into your hands; and although in your robust faith you could despise such an attempt, it is still a good thing for us also to know how to bring aid to our faith by defending it. For the Apostle Peter instructs us to be “ready always to give an answer to every

one that asketh us a reason of the faith and hope that is in us;” and the Apostle Paul says, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” These are the motives which chiefly impel me to hold such converse with you in this volume, as the Lord shall enable me. I have never liked, indeed, to intrude the perusal of any of my humble labours on any eminent person, who is like yourself conspicuous to all from the elevation of his office, without his own request,—especially when he is not blessed with the enjoyment of a dignified retirement, but is still occupied in the public duties of a soldier’s profession; this has always seemed to me to savour more impertinence than of respectful esteem. If, then, I have incurred censure of this kind, while acting on the reasons which I have now mentioned, I crave the favour of your forgiveness, and kindly regard to the following arguments.

#### CHAPTER 3 [III.]

##### CONJUGAL CHASTITY THE GIFT OF GOD

That chastity in the married state is God’s gift, is shown by the most blessed Paul, when, speaking on this very subject, he says: “But I would that all men were even as I myself: but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” Observe, he tells us that this gift is from God; and although he classes it below that continence in which he would have all men to be like himself, he still describes it as a gift of God. Whence we understand that, when these precepts are given to us in order that we should do them, nothing else is stated than that there ought to be within us our own will also for receiving and having them. When, therefore, these are shown to be gifts of God, it is meant that they must be sought from Him if they are not already possessed; and if they are possessed, thanks must be given to Him for the possession; moreover, that our own wills have but small avail for seeking, obtaining, and holding fast these gifts, unless they be assisted by God’s grace.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### A DIFFICULTY AS REGARDS THE CHASTITY OF UNBELIEVERS. NONE BUT A BELIEVER IS TRULY A CHASTE MAN

What, then, have we to say when conjugal chastity is discovered even in some unbelievers? Must it be said that they sin, in that they make a bad use of a gift of God, in not restoring it to the worship of Him from whom they received it? Or must these endowments, perchance, be not regarded as gifts of God at all, when they are not believers who exercise them; according to the apostle's sentiment, when he says, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin?" But who would dare to say that a gift of God is sin? For the soul and the body, and all the natural endowments which are implanted in the soul and the body, even in the persons of sinful men, are still gifts of God; for it is God who made them, and not they themselves. When it is said, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," only those things are meant which men themselves do. When men, therefore, do without faith those things which seem to appertain to conjugal chastity, they do them either to please men, whether themselves or others, or to avoid incurring such troubles as are incidental to human nature in those things which they corruptly desire, or to pay service to devils. Sins are not really resigned, but some sins are overpowered by other sins. God forbid, then, that a man be truly called chaste who observes connubial fidelity to his wife from any other motive than devotion to the true God.

#### CHAPTER 5 [IV.]

THE NATURAL GOOD OF MARRIAGE. ALL SOCIETY NATURALLY REPUDIATES A FRAUDULENT COMPANION. WHAT IS TRUE CONJUGAL PURITY? NO TRUE VIRGINITY AND CHASTITY EXCEPT IN DEVOTION TO TRUE FAITH

The union, then, of male and female for the purpose of procreation is the natural good of marriage. But he makes a bad use of this good who uses it bestially, so that his intention is on the gratification of lust, instead of the desire of offspring. Nevertheless, in sundry animals unendowed with reason, as, for instance, in most birds, there is both preserved a certain kind of confederation of pairs, and a social combination of skill in nest-building; and their mutual division of the periods for cherishing their eggs and their alternation in the labor of feeding their young, give them the appearance of so acting, when they mate, as to be intent rather on securing the continuance of their kind than on gratifying lust. Of these two, the one is the likeness of man in a brute; the other, the likeness of the brute in man. With respect,

however, to what I ascribed to the nature of marriage, that the male and the female are united together as associates for procreation, and consequently do not defraud each other (forasmuch as every associated state has a natural abhorrence of a fraudulent companion), although even men without faith possess this palpable blessing of nature, yet, since they use it not in faith, they only turn it to evil and sin. In like manner, therefore, the marriage of believers converts to the use of righteousness that carnal concupiscence by which “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit.” For they entertain the firm purpose of generating offspring to be regenerated—that the children who are born of them as “children of the world” may be born again and become “sons of God.” Wherefore all parents who do not beget children with this intention, this will, this purpose, of transferring them from being members of the first man into being members of Christ, but boast as unbelieving parents over unbelieving children,—however circumspect they be in their cohabitation, studiously limiting it to the begetting of children,—really have no conjugal chastity in themselves. For inasmuch as chastity is a virtue, hating unchastity as its contrary vice, and as all the virtues (even those whose operation is by means of the body) have their seat in the soul, how can the body be in any true sense said to be chaste, when the soul itself is committing fornication against the true God? Now such fornication the holy psalmist censures when he says: “For, lo, they that are far from Thee shall perish: Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from Thee.” There is, then, no true chastity, whether conjugal, or vidual, or virginal, except that which devotes itself to true faith. For though consecrated virginity is rightly preferred to marriage, yet what Christian in his sober mind would not prefer catholic Christian women who have been even more than once married, to not only vestals, but also to heretical virgins? So great is the avail of faith, of which the apostle says, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin;” and of which it is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “Without faith it is impossible to please God.”

#### CHAPTER 6 [V.]

THE CENSURING OF LUST IS NOT A CONDEMNATION OF MARRIAGE; WHENCE COMES SHAME IN THE HUMAN BODY. ADAM AND EVE WERE NOT CREATED BLIND; MEANING OF THEIR “EYES BEING OPENED.”

Now, this being the real state of the question, they undoubtedly err who suppose that, when fleshly lust is censured, marriage is condemned; as if the malady of concupiscence was the outcome of marriage and not of sin. Were not those first spouses, whose nuptials God blessed with the words, “Be fruitful and multiply,” naked, and yet not ashamed? Why, then, did shame arise out of their members after sin, except because an indecent motion arose from them, which, if men had not sinned, would certainly never have existed in marriage? Or was it, forsooth, as some hold (who give little heed to what they read), that human beings were, like dogs, at first created blind; and—absurder still—obtained sight, not as dogs do, by growing, but by sinning? Far be it from us to entertain such an opinion. But they gather that opinion of theirs from reading: “She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat: and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” This accounts for the opinion of unintelligent persons, that the eyes of the first man and woman were previously closed, because Holy Scripture testifies that they were then opened. Well, then, were Hagar’s eyes, the handmaid of Sarah, previously shut, when, with her thirsty and sobbing child, she opened her eyes and saw the well? Or did those two disciples, after the Lord’s resurrection, walk in the way with Him with their eyes shut, since the evangelist says of them that “in the breaking of bread their eyes were opened, and they knew Him”? What, therefore, is written concerning the first man and woman, that “the eyes of them both were opened,” we ought to understand as that they gave attention to perceiving and recognising the new state which had befallen their body. Now that their eyes were opened, their body appeared to them naked, and they knew it. If this were not the meaning, how, when the beast of the field and the fowls of the air were brought unto him, could Adam have given them names if his eyes were shut? He could not have done this without distinguishing them; and he could not distinguish them without seeing them. How, too, could the woman herself have been beheld so clearly by him when he said, “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh”? If, indeed, any one shall be so determined on cavilling as to insist that Adam might have acquired a discernment of these objects, not by sight but by touch, what explanation will he have to give of the passage wherein we are told how the woman “saw that the tree,” from which she was about to pluck the forbidden fruit,

“was pleasant for the eyes to behold”? No; “they were both naked, and were not ashamed,” not because they had no eyesight, but because they perceived no reason to be ashamed in their members, which had all along been seen by them. For it is not said: They were both naked, and knew it not; but “they were not ashamed.” Because, indeed, nothing had previously happened which was not lawful, so nothing had ensued which could cause them shame.

## CHAPTER 7 [VI.]

### MAN’S DISOBEDIENCE JUSTLY REQUITED IN THE REBELLION OF HIS OWN FLESH; THE BLUSH OF SHAME FOR THE DISOBEDIENT MEMBERS OF THE BODY

When the first man transgressed the law of God, he began to have another law in his members which was repugnant to the law of his mind, and he felt the evil of his own disobedience when he experienced in the disobedience of his flesh a most righteous retribution recoiling on himself. Such, then, was “the opening of his eyes” which the serpent had promised him in his temptation—the knowledge, in fact, of something which he had better been ignorant of. Then, indeed, did man perceive within himself what he had done; then did he distinguish evil from good,—not by avoiding it, but by enduring it. For it certainly was not just that obedience should be rendered by his servant, that is, his body, to him, who had not obeyed his own Lord. Well, then, how significant is the fact that the eyes, and lips, and tongue, and hands, and feet, and the bending of back, and neck, and sides, are all placed within our power—to be applied to such operations as are suitable to them, when we have a body free from impediments and in a sound state of health; but when it must come to man’s great function of the procreation of children the members which were expressly created for this purpose will not obey the direction of the will, but lust has to be waited for to set these members in motion, as if it had legal right over them, and sometimes it refuses to act when the mind wills, while often it acts against its will! Must not this bring the blush of shame over the freedom of the human will, that by its contempt of God, its own Commander, it has lost all proper command for itself over its own members? Now, wherein could be found a more fitting demonstration of the just depravation of human nature by reason of its disobedience, than in the disobedience of those parts whence nature

herself derives subsistence by succession? For it is by an especial propriety that those parts of the body are designated as natural. This, then, was the reason why the first human pair, on experiencing in the flesh that motion which was indecent because disobedient, and on feeling the shame of their nakedness, covered these offending members with fig-leaves; in order that, at the very least, by the will of the ashamed offenders, a veil might be thrown over that which was put into motion without the will of those who wished it: and since shame arose from what indecently pleased, decency might be attained by concealment.

#### CHAPTER 8 [VII.]

##### THE EVIL OF LUST DOES NOT TAKE AWAY THE GOOD OF MARRIAGE

Forasmuch, then, as the good of marriage could not be lost by the addition of this evil, some imprudent persons suppose that this is not an added evil, but something which appertains to the original good. A distinction, however, occurs not only to subtle reason, but even to the most ordinary natural judgment, which was both apparent in the case of the first man and woman, and also holds good still in the case of married persons to-day. What they afterward effected in propagation,—that is the good of marriage; but what they first veiled through shame,—that is the evil of concupiscence, which everywhere shuns sight, and in its shame seeks privacy. Since, therefore, marriage effects some good even out of that evil, it has whereof to glory; but since the good cannot be effected without the evil, it has reason for feeling shame. The case may be illustrated by the example of a lame man. Suppose him to attain to some good object by limping after it, then, on the one hand, the attainment itself is not evil because of the evil of the man's lameness; nor, on the other hand, is the lameness good because of the goodness of the attainment. So, on the same principle, we ought not to condemn marriage because of the evil of lust; nor must we praise lust because of the good of marriage.

## CHAPTER 9 [VIII.]

THIS DISEASE OF CONCUPISCENCE IN MARRIAGE IS NOT TO BE A MATTER OF WILL, BUT OF NECESSITY; WHAT OUGHT TO BE THE WILL OF BELIEVERS IN THE USE OF MATRIMONY; WHO IS TO BE REGARDED AS USING, AND NOT SUCCUMBING TO, THE EVIL OF CONCUPISCENCE; HOW THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FORMERLY USED WIVES

This disease of concupiscence is what the apostle refers to, when, speaking to married believers, he says: “This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the disease of desire, even as the Gentiles which know not God.” The married believer, therefore, must not only not use another man’s vessel, which is what they do who lust after others’ wives; but he must know that even his own vessel is not to be possessed in the disease of carnal concupiscence. And this counsel is not to be understood as if the apostle prohibited conjugal—that is to say, lawful and honourable—cohabitation; but so as that that cohabitation (which would have no adjunct of unwholesome lust, were it not that man’s perfect freedom of choice had become by preceding sin so disabled that it has this fatal adjunct) should not be a matter of will, but of necessity, without which, nevertheless, it would be impossible to attain to the fruition of the will itself in the procreation of children. And this wish is not in the marriages of believers determined by the purpose of having such children born as shall pass through life in this present world, but such as shall be born again in Christ, and remain in Him for evermore. Now if this result should come about, the reward of a full felicity will spring from marriage; but if such result be not realized, there will yet ensue to the married pair the peace of their good will. Whosoever possesses his vessel (that is, his wife) with this intention of heart, certainly does not possess her in the “disease of desire,” as the Gentiles which know not God, but in sanctification and honour, as believers who hope in God. A man turns to use the evil of concupiscence, and is not overcome by it, when he bridles and restrains its rage, as it works in inordinate and indecorous motions; and never relaxes his hold upon it except when intent on offspring, and then controls and applies it to the carnal generation of children to be spiritually regenerated, not to the subjection of the spirit to the flesh in a sordid servitude. That the holy fathers of olden times after Abraham, and



before him, to whom God gave His testimony that “they pleased Him,” thus used their wives, no one who is a Christian ought to doubt, since it was permitted to certain individuals amongst them to have a plurality of wives, where the reason was for the multiplication of their offspring, not the desire of varying gratification.

#### CHAPTER 10 [IX.]

WHY IT WAS SOMETIMES PERMITTED THAT A MAN SHOULD HAVE SEVERAL WIVES,  
YET NO WOMAN WAS EVER ALLOWED TO HAVE MORE THAN ONE HUSBAND.  
NATURE PREFERS SINGLENES IN HER DOMINATIONS

Now, if to the God of our fathers, who is likewise our God, such a plurality of wives had not been displeasing for the purpose that lust might have a fuller range of indulgence; then, on such a supposition, the holy women also ought each to have rendered service to several husbands. But if any woman had so acted, what feeling but that of a disgraceful concupiscence could impel her to have more husbands, seeing that by such licence she could not have more children? That the good purpose of marriage, however, is better promoted by one husband with one wife, than by a husband with several wives, is shown plainly enough by the very first union of a married pair, which was made by the Divine Being Himself, with the intention of marriages taking their beginning therefrom, and of its affording to them a more honourable precedent. In the advance, however, of the human race, it came to pass that to certain good men were united a plurality of good wives, —many to each; and from this it would seem that moderation sought rather unity on one side for dignity, while nature permitted plurality on the other side for fecundity. For on natural principles it is more feasible for one to have dominion over many, than for many to have dominion over one. Nor can it be doubted, that it is more consonant with the order of nature that men should bear rule over women, than women over men. It is with this principle in view that the apostle says, “The head of the woman is the man;” and, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands.” So also the Apostle Peter writes: “Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.” Now, although the fact of the matter is, that while nature loves singleness in her dominations, but we may see plurality existing more readily in the subordinate portion of our race; yet for all that, it was at no time lawful for

one man to have a plurality of wives, except for the purpose of a greater number of children springing from him. Wherefore, if one woman cohabits with several men, inasmuch as no increase of offspring accrues to her therefrom, but only a more frequent gratification of lust, she cannot possibly be a wife, but only a harlot.

## CHAPTER 11 [X.]

### THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE; MARRIAGE INDISSOLUBLE; THE WORLD'S LAW ABOUT DIVORCE DIFFERENT FROM THE GOSPEL'S

It is certainly not fecundity only, the fruit of which consists of offspring, nor chastity only, whose bond is fidelity, but also a certain sacramental bond in marriage which is recommended to believers in wedlock. Accordingly it is enjoined by the apostle: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church." Of this bond the substance undoubtedly is this, that the man and the woman who are joined together in matrimony should remain inseparable as long as they live; and that it should be unlawful for one consort to be parted from the other, except for the cause of fornication. For this is preserved in the case of Christ and the Church; so that, as a living one with a living one, there is no divorce, no separation for ever. And so complete is the observance of this bond in the city of our God, in His holy mountain—that is to say, in the Church of Christ—by all married believers, who are undoubtedly members of Christ, that, although women marry, and men take wives, for the purpose of procreating children, it is never permitted one to put away even an unfruitful wife for the sake of having another to bear children. And whosoever does this is held to be guilty of adultery by the law of the gospel; though not by this world's rule, which allows a divorce between the parties, without even the allegation of guilt, and the contraction of other nuptial engagements,—a concession which, the Lord tells us, even the holy Moses extended to the people of Israel, because of the hardness of their hearts. The same condemnation applies to the woman, if she is married to another man. So enduring, indeed, are the rights of marriage between those who have contracted them, as long as they both live, that even they are looked on as man and wife still, who have separated from one another, rather than they between whom a new connection has been formed. For by this new connection they would not be guilty of

adultery, if the previous matrimonial relation did not still continue. If the husband die, with whom a true marriage was made, a true marriage is now possible by a connection which would before have been adultery. Thus between the conjugal pair, as long as they live, the nuptial bond has a permanent obligation, and can be cancelled neither by separation nor by union with another. But this permanence avails, in such cases, only for injury from the sin, not for a bond of the covenant. In like manner the soul of an apostate, which renounces as it were its marriage union with Christ, does not, even though it has cast its faith away, lose the sacrament of its faith, which it received in the laver of regeneration. It would undoubtedly be given back to him if he were to return, although he lost it on his departure from Christ. He retains, however, the sacrament after his apostasy, to the aggravation of his punishment, not for meriting the reward.

#### CHAPTER 12 [XL.]

MARRIAGE DOES NOT CANCEL A MUTUAL VOW OF CONTINENCE; THERE WAS TRUE WEDLOCK BETWEEN MARY AND JOSEPH; IN WHAT WAY JOSEPH WAS THE FATHER OF CHRIST

But God forbid that the nuptial bond should be regarded as broken between those who have by mutual consent agreed to observe a perpetual abstinence from the use of carnal concupiscence. Nay, it will be only a firmer one, whereby they have exchanged pledges together, which will have to be kept by an especial endearment and concord,—not by the voluptuous links of bodies, but by the voluntary affections of souls. For it was not deceitfully that the angel said to Joseph: “Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife.” She is called his wife because of her first troth of betrothal, although he had had no carnal knowledge of her, nor was destined to have. The designation of wife was neither destroyed nor made untrue, where there never had been, nor was meant to be, any carnal connection. That virgin wife was rather a holier and more wonderful joy to her husband because of her very pregnancy without man, with disparity as to the child that was born, without disparity in the faith they cherished. And because of this conjugal fidelity they are both deservedly called “parents” of Christ (not only she as His mother, but he as His father, as being her husband), both having been such in mind and purpose, though not in the flesh. But while the one was His

father in purpose only, and the other His mother in the flesh also, they were both of them, for all that, only the parents of His humility, not of His sublimity; of His weakness, not of His divinity. For the Gospel does not lie, in which one reads, “Both His father and His mother marvelled at those things which were spoken about Him;” and in another passage, “Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year;” and again a little afterwards, “His mother said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.” In order, however, that He might show them that He had a Father besides them, who begat Him without a mother, He said to them in answer: “How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Furthermore, lest He should be thought to have repudiated them as His parents by what He had just said, the evangelist at once added: “And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them; and He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.” Subject to whom but His parents? And who was the subject but Jesus Christ, “who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God”? And wherefore subject to them, who were far beneath the form of God, except that “He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant,”—the form in which His parents lived? Now, since she bore Him without his engendering, they could not surely have both been His parents, of that form of a servant, if they had not been conjugally united, though without carnal connection. Accordingly the genealogical series (although both parents of Christ are mentioned together in the succession) had to be extended, as it is in fact, down rather to Joseph’s name, that no wrong might be done, in the case of this marriage, to the male, and indeed the stronger sex, while at the same time there was nothing detrimental to truth, since Joseph, no less than Mary, was of the seed of David, of whom it was foretold that Christ should come.

## CHAPTER 13

IN THE MARRIAGE OF MARY AND JOSEPH THERE WERE ALL THE BLESSINGS OF THE WEDDED STATE; ALL THAT IS BORN OF CONCUBINAGE IS SINFUL FLESH

The entire good, therefore, of the nuptial institution was effected in the case of these parents of Christ: there was offspring, there was faithfulness, there was the bond. As offspring, we recognise the Lord Jesus Himself; the

fidelity, in that there was no adultery; the bond, because there was no divorce. [XII.] Only there was no nuptial cohabitation; because He who was to be without sin, and was sent not in sinful flesh, but in the likeness of sinful flesh, could not possibly have been made in sinful flesh itself without that shameful lust of the flesh which comes from sin, and without which He willed to be born, in order that He might teach us, that every one who is born of sexual intercourse is in fact sinful flesh, since that alone which was not born of such intercourse was not sinful flesh. Nevertheless conjugal intercourse is not in itself sin, when it is had with the intention of producing children; because the mind's good-will leads the ensuing bodily pleasure, instead of following its lead; and the human choice is not distracted by the yoke of sin pressing upon it, inasmuch as the blow of the sin is rightly brought back to the purposes of procreation. This blow has a certain prurient activity which plays the king in the foul indulgences of adultery, and fornication, and lasciviousness, and uncleanness; whilst in the indispensable duties of the marriage state, it exhibits the docility of the slave. In the one case it is condemned as the shameless effrontery of so violent a master; in the other, it gets modest praise as the honest service of so submissive an attendant. This lust, then, is not in itself the good of the nuptial institution; but it is obscenity in sinful men, a necessity in procreant parents, the fire of lascivious indulgences, the shame of nuptial pleasures. Wherefore, then, may not persons remain man and wife when they cease by mutual consent from cohabitation; seeing that Joseph and Mary continued such, though they never even began to cohabit?

#### CHAPTER 14 [XIII.]

BEFORE CHRIST IT WAS A TIME FOR MARRYING; SINCE CHRIST IT HAS BEEN A TIME FOR CONTINENCE

Now this propagation of children which among the ancient saints was a most bounden duty for the purpose of begetting and preserving a people for God, amongst whom the prophecy of Christ's coming must needs have had precedence over everything, now has no longer the same necessity. For from among all nations the way is open for an abundant offspring to receive spiritual regeneration, from whatever quarter they derive their natural birth. So that we may acknowledge that the scripture which says there is "a time

to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing,” is to be distributed in its clauses to the periods before Christ and since. The former was the time to embrace, the latter to refrain from embracing.

## CHAPTER 15

### THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLE ON THIS SUBJECT

Accordingly the apostle also, speaking apparently with this passage in view, declares: “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had them not; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as though they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you without solicitude.” This entire passage (that I may express my view on this subject in the shape of a brief exposition of the apostle’s words) I think must be understood as follows: “This I say, brethren, the time is short.” No longer is God’s people to be propagated by carnal generation; but, henceforth, it is to be gathered out by spiritual regeneration. “It remaineth, therefore, that they that have wives” be not subject to carnal concupiscence; “and they that weep,” under the sadness of present evil, should rejoice in the hope of future blessing; “and they that rejoice,” over any temporary advantage, should fear the eternal judgment; “and they that buy,” should so hold their possessions as not to cleave to them by overmuch love; “and they that use this world” should reflect that it is passing away, and does not remain. “For the fashion of this world passeth away: but,” he says, “I would have you to be without solicitude,”—in other words: I would have you lift up your heart, that it may dwell among those things which do not pass away. He then goes on to say: “He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.” And thus to some extent he explains what he had already said: “Let them that have wives be as though they had none.” For they who have wives in such a way as to care for the things of the Lord, how they may please the Lord, without having any care for the things of the world in order to please their wives, are, in fact, just as if they had no wives. And this is effected with greater ease when the wives, too, are of such a disposition,

because they please their husbands not merely because they are rich, because they are high in rank, noble in race, and amiable in natural temper, but because they are believers, because they are religious, because they are chaste, because they are good men.

#### CHAPTER 16 [XIV.]

A CERTAIN DEGREE OF INTEMPERANCE IS TO BE TOLERATED IN THE CASE OF MARRIED PERSONS; THE USE OF MATRIMONY FOR THE MERE PLEASURE OF LUST IS NOT WITHOUT SIN, BUT BECAUSE OF THE NUPTIAL RELATION THE SIN IS VENIAL

But in the married, as these things are desirable and praiseworthy, so the others are to be tolerated, that no lapse occur into damnable sins; that is, into fornications and adulteries. To escape this evil, even such embraces of husband and wife as have not procreation for their object, but serve an overbearing concupiscence, are permitted, so far as to be within range of forgiveness, though not prescribed by way of commandment: and the married pair are enjoined not to defraud one the other, lest Satan should tempt them by reason of their incontinence. For thus says the Scripture: “Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other; except it be with consent for a time, that ye may have leisure for prayer; and then come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.” Now in a case where permission must be given, it cannot by any means be contended that there is not some amount of sin. Since, however, the cohabitation for the purpose of procreating children, which must be admitted to be the proper end of marriage, is not sinful, what is it which the apostle allows to be permissible, but that married persons, when they have not the gift of continence, may require one from the other the due of the flesh—and that not from a wish for procreation, but for the pleasure of concupiscence? This gratification incurs not the imputation of guilt on account of marriage, but receives permission on account of marriage. This, therefore, must be reckoned among the praises of matrimony; that, on its own account, it makes pardonable that which does not essentially appertain to itself. For the nuptial embrace, which subserves

the demands of concupiscence, is so effected as not to impede the child-bearing, which is the end and aim of marriage.

#### CHAPTER 17 [XV.]

WHAT IS SINLESS IN THE USE OF MATRIMONY? WHAT IS ATTENDED WITH VENIAL SIN, AND WHAT WITH MORTAL?

It is, however, one thing for married persons to have intercourse only for the wish to beget children, which is not sinful: it is another thing for them to desire carnal pleasure in cohabitation, but with the spouse only, which involves venial sin. For although propagation of offspring is not the motive of the intercourse, there is still no attempt to prevent such propagation, either by wrong desire or evil appliance. They who resort to these, although called by the name of spouses, are really not such; they retain no vestige of true matrimony, but pretend the honourable designation as a cloak for criminal conduct. Having also proceeded so far, they are betrayed into exposing their children, which are born against their will. They hate to nourish and retain those whom they were afraid they would beget. This infliction of cruelty on their offspring so reluctantly begotten, unmask the sin which they had practised in darkness, and drags it clearly into the light of day. The open cruelty reproves the concealed sin. Sometimes, indeed, this lustful cruelty, or, if you please, cruel lust, resorts to such extravagant methods as to use poisonous drugs to secure barrenness; or else, if unsuccessful in this, to destroy the conceived seed by some means previous to birth, preferring that its offspring should rather perish than receive vitality; or if it was advancing to life within the womb, should be slain before it was born. Well, if both parties alike are so flagitious, they are not husband and wife; and if such were their character from the beginning, they have not come together by wedlock but by debauchery. But if the two are not alike in such sin, I boldly declare either that the woman is, so to say, the husband's harlot; or the man the wife's adulterer.

#### CHAPTER 18 [XVI.]

CONTINENCE BETTER THAN MARRIAGE; BUT MARRIAGE BETTER THAN FORNICATION



Forasmuch, then, as marriage cannot be such as that of the primitive men might have been, if sin had not preceded; it may yet be like that of the holy fathers of the olden time, in such wise that the carnal concupiscence which causes shame (which did not exist in paradise previous to the fall, and after that event was not allowed to remain there), although necessarily forming a part of the body of this death, is not subservient to it, but only submits its function, when forced thereto, for the sole purpose of assisting in the procreation of children; otherwise, since the present time (as we have already said) is the period for abstaining from the nuptial embrace, and therefore makes no necessary demand on the exercise of the said function, seeing that all nations now contribute so abundantly to the production of an offspring which shall receive spiritual birth, there is the greater room for the blessing of an excellent continence. “He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.” He, however, who cannot receive it, “even if he marry, sinneth not;” and if a woman have not the gift of continence, let her also marry. “It is good, indeed, for a man not to touch a woman.” But since “all men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given,” it remains that “to avoid fornication, every man ought to have his own wife, and every woman her own husband.” And thus the weakness of incontinence is hindered from falling into the ruin of profligacy by the honourable estate of matrimony. Now that which the apostle says of women, “I will therefore that the younger women marry,” is also applicable to males: I will that the younger men take wives; that so it may appertain to both sexes alike “to bear children, to be” fathers and “mothers of families, to give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.”

## CHAPTER 19 [XVII.]

### BLESSING OF MATRIMONY

In matrimony, however, let these nuptial blessings be the objects of our love—offspring, fidelity, the sacramental bond. Offspring, not that it be born only, but born again; for it is born to punishment unless it be born again to life. Fidelity, not such as even unbelievers observe one towards the other, in their ardent love of the flesh. For what husband, however impious himself, likes an adulterous wife? Or what wife, however impious she be, likes an adulterous husband? This is indeed a natural good in marriage, though a

carnal one. But a member of Christ ought to be afraid of adultery, not on account of himself, but of his spouse; and ought to hope to receive from Christ the reward of that fidelity which he shows to his spouse. The sacramental bond, again, which is lost neither by divorce nor by adultery, should be guarded by husband and wife with concord and chastity. For it alone is that which even an unfruitful marriage retains by the law of piety, now that all that hope of fruitfulness is lost for the purpose of which the couple married. Let these nuptial blessings be praised in marriage by him who wishes to extol the nuptial institution. Carnal concupiscence, however, must not be ascribed to marriage: it is only to be tolerated in marriage. It is not a good which comes out of the essence of marriage, but an evil which is the accident of original sin.

#### CHAPTER 20 [XVIII]

##### WHY CHILDREN OF WRATH ARE BORN OF HOLY MATRIMONY

This is the reason, indeed, why of even the just and lawful marriages of the children of God are born, not children of God, but children of the world; because also those who generate, if they are already regenerate, beget children not as children of God, but as still children of the world. “The children of this world,” says our Lord, “beget and are begotten.” From the fact, therefore, that we are still children of this world, our outer man is in a state of corruption; and on this account our offspring are born as children of the present world; nor do they become sons of God, except they be regenerated. Yet inasmuch as we are children of God, our inner man is renewed from day to day. And yet even our outer man has been sanctified through the laver of regeneration, and has received the hope of future incorruption, on which account it is justly designated as “the temple of God.” “Your bodies,” says the apostle, “are the temples of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, and which ye have of God; and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a great price: therefore glorify and carry God in your body.” The whole of this statement is made in reference to our present sanctification, but especially in consequence of that hope of which he says in another passage, “We ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” If, then, the redemption of our body is

expected, as the apostle declares, it follows, that being an expectation, it is as yet a matter of hope, and not of actual possession. Accordingly the apostle adds: "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Not, therefore, by that which we are waiting for, but by that which we are now enduring, are the children of our flesh born. God forbid that a man who possesses faith should, when he hears the apostle bid men "love their wives," love that carnal concupiscence in his wife which he ought not to love even in himself; as he may know, if he listens to the words of another apostle: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever, even as also God abideth for ever."

#### CHAPTER 21 [XIX.]

THUS SINNERS ARE BORN OF RIGHTEOUS PARENTS, EVEN AS WILD OLIVES SPRING FROM THE OLIVE

That, therefore, which is born of the lust of the flesh is really born of the world, and not of God; but it is born of God, when it is born again of water and of the Spirit. The guilt of this concupiscence, regeneration alone remits, even as natural generation contracts it. What, then, is generated must be regenerated, in order that likewise since it cannot be otherwise, what has been contracted may be remitted. It is, no doubt, very wonderful that what has been remitted in the parent should still be contracted in the offspring; but nevertheless such is the case. That this mysterious verity, which unbelievers neither see nor believe, might get some palpable evidence in its support, God in His providence has secured in the example of certain trees. For why should we not suppose that for this very purpose the wild olive springs from the olive? Is it not indeed credible that, in a thing which has been created for the use of mankind, the Creator provided and appointed what should afford an instructive example, applicable to the human race? It is a wonderful thing, then, how those who have been themselves delivered

by grace from the bondage of sin, should still beget those who are tied and bound by the self-same chain, and who require the same process of loosening? Yes; and we admit the wonderful fact. But that the embryo of wild olive trees should latently exist in the germs of true olives, who would deem credible, if it were not proved true by experiment and observation? In the same manner, therefore, as a wild olive grows out of the seed of the wild olive, and from the seed of the true olive springs also nothing but a wild olive, notwithstanding the very great difference there is between the wild olive and the olive; so what is born in the flesh, either of a sinner or of a just man, is in both instances a sinner, notwithstanding the vast distinction which exists between the sinner and the righteous man. He that is begotten is no sinner as yet in act, and is still new from his birth; but in guilt he is old. Human from the Creator, he is a captive of the destroyer, and needs a redeemer. The difficulty, however, is how a state of captivity can possibly befall the offspring, when the parents have been themselves previously redeemed from it. Now it is no easy matter to unravel this intricate point, or to explain it in a set discourse; therefore unbelievers refuse to accept it as true; just as if in that other point about the wild olive and the olive, which we gave in illustration, any reason could be easily found, or explanation clearly given, why the self-same shoot should sprout out of so dissimilar a stock. The truth, however, of this can be discovered by any one who is willing to make the experiment. Let it then serve for a good example for suggesting belief of what admits not of ocular demonstration.

## CHAPTER 22 [XX.]

### EVEN INFANTS, WHEN UNBAPTIZED, ARE IN THE POWER OF THE DEVIL; EXORCISM IN THE CASE OF INFANTS, AND RENUNCIATION OF THE DEVIL

Now the Christian faith unfalteringly declares, what our new heretics have begun to deny, both that they who are cleansed in the laver of regeneration are redeemed from the power of the devil, and that those who have not yet been redeemed by such regeneration are still captive in the power of the devil, even if they be infant children of the redeemed, unless they be themselves redeemed by the self-same grace of Christ. For we cannot doubt that that blessing of God applies to every stage of human life, which the apostle describes when he says concerning Him: “Who hath delivered us

from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.” From this power of darkness, therefore, of which the devil is the prince,—in other words, from the power of the devil and his angels,—infants are delivered when they are baptized; and whosoever denies this, is convicted by the truth of the Church’s very sacraments, which no heretical novelty in the Church of Christ is permitted to destroy or change, so long as the Divine Head rules and helps the entire body which He owns—small as well as great. It is true, then, and in no way false, that the devil’s power is exorcised in infants, and that they renounce him by the hearts and mouths of those who bring them to baptism, being unable to do so by their own; in order that they may be delivered from the power of darkness, and be translated into the kingdom of their Lord. What is that, therefore, within them which keeps them in the power of the devil until they are delivered from it by Christ’s sacrament of baptism? What is it, I ask, but sin? Nothing else, indeed, has the devil found which enables him to put under his own control that nature of man which the good Creator made good. But infants have committed no sin of their own since they have been alive. Only original sin, therefore, remains, whereby they are made captive under the devil’s power, until they are redeemed therefrom by the laver of regeneration and the blood of Christ, and pass into their Redeemer’s kingdom,—the power of their enthraller being frustrated, and power being given them to become “sons of God” instead of children of this world.

#### CHAPTER 23 [XXI.]

SIN HAS NOT ARISEN OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF MARRIAGE; THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY A GREAT ONE IN THE CASE OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH—A VERY SMALL ONE IN THE CASE OF A MAN AND HIS WIFE

If now we interrogate, so to speak, those goods of marriage to which we have often referred, and inquire how it is that sin could possibly have been propagated from them to infants, we shall get this answer from the first of them—the work of procreation of offspring: “My happiness would in paradise have been greater if sin had not been committed. For to me belongs that blessing of almighty God: Be fruitful, and multiply.’ For accomplishing this good work, divers members were created suited to each sex; these members were, of course, in existence before sin, but they were

not objects of shame.” This will be the answer of the second good—the fidelity of chastity: “If sin had not been committed, what in paradise could have been more secure than myself, when there was no lust of my own to spur me, none of another to tempt me?” And then this will be the answer of the sacramental bond of marriage,—the third good: “Of me was that word spoken in paradise before the entrance of sin: A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they two shall become one flesh.”“ This the apostle applies to the case of Christ and of the Church, and calls it then “a great sacrament.” What, then, in Christ and in the Church is great, in the instances of each married pair it is but very small, but even then it is the sacrament of an inseparable union. What now is there in these three blessings of marriage out of which the bond of sin could pass over to posterity? Absolutely nothing. And in these blessings it is certain that the goodness of matrimony is entirely comprised; and even now good wedlock consists of these same blessings.

#### CHAPTER 24

##### LUST AND SHAME COME FROM SIN; THE LAW OF SIN; THE SHAMELESSNESS OF THE CYNICS

But if, in like manner, the question be asked of the concupiscence of the flesh, how it is that acts now bring shame which once were free from shame, will not her answer be, that she only began to have existence in men’s members after sin? [XXII.] And, therefore, that the apostle designated her influence as “the law of sin,” inasmuch as she subjugated man to herself when he was unwilling to remain subject to his God; and that it was she who made the first married pair ashamed at that moment when they covered their loins; even as all are still ashamed, and seek out secret retreats for cohabitation, and dare not have even the children, whom they have themselves thus begotten, to be witnesses of what they do. It was against this modesty of natural shame that the Cynic philosophers, in the error of their astonishing shamelessness, struggled so hard: they thought that the intercourse indeed of husband and wife, since it was lawful and honourable, should therefore be done in public. Such barefaced obscenity deserved to receive the name of dogs; and so they went by the title of “Cynics.”

## CHAPTER 25 [XXIII.]

CONCUPISCENCE IN THE REGENERATE WITHOUT CONSENT IS NOT SIN; IN WHAT SENSE CONCUPISCENCE IS CALLED SIN

Now this concupiscence, this law of sin which dwells in our members, to which the law of righteousness forbids allegiance, saying in the words of the apostle, “Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin:”—this concupiscence, I say, which is cleansed only by the sacrament of regeneration, does undoubtedly, by means of natural birth, pass on the bond of sin to a man’s posterity, unless they are themselves loosed from it by regeneration. In the case, however, of the regenerate, concupiscence is not itself sin any longer, whenever they do not consent to it for illicit works, and when the members are not applied by the presiding mind to perpetrate such deeds. So that, if what is enjoined in one passage, “Thou shalt not covet,” is not kept, that at any rate is observed which is commanded in another place, “Thou shalt not go after thy concupiscences.” Inasmuch, however, as by a certain manner of speech it is called sin, since it arose from sin, and, when it has the upper hand, produces sin, the guilt of it prevails in the natural man; but this guilt, by Christ’s grace through the remission of all sins, is not suffered to prevail in the regenerate man, if he does not yield obedience to it whenever it urges him to the commission of evil. As arising from sin, it is, I say, called sin, although in the regenerate it is not actually sin; and it has this designation applied to it, just as speech which the tongue produces is itself called “tongue;” and just as the word “hand” is used in the sense of writing, which the hand produces. In the same way concupiscence is called sin, as producing sin when it conquers the will: so to cold and frost the epithet “sluggish” is given; not as arising from, but as productive of, sluggishness; benumbing us, in fact.

## CHAPTER 26

WHATEVER IS BORN THROUGH CONCUPISCENCE IS NOT UNDESERVEDLY IN SUBJECTION TO THE DEVIL BY REASON OF SIN; THE DEVIL DESERVES HEAVIER PUNISHMENT THAN MEN

This wound which the devil has inflicted on the human race compels everything which has its birth in consequence of it to be under the devil's power, as if he were rightly plucking fruit off his own tree. Not as if man's nature, which is only of God, came from him, but sin alone, which is not of God. For it is not on its own account that man's nature is under condemnation, because it is the work of God, and therefore laudable; but on account of that condemnable corruption by which it has been vitiated. Now it is by reason of this condemnation that it is in subjection to the devil, who is also in the same damnable state. For the devil is himself an unclean spirit: good, indeed, so far as he is a spirit, but evil as being unclean; for by nature he is a spirit, by the corruption thereof an unclean one. Of these two, the one is of God, the other of himself. His hold over men, therefore, whether of an advanced age or in infancy, is not because they are human, but because they are polluted. He, then, who feels surprise that God's creature is a subject of the devil, should cease from such feeling. For one creature of God is in subjection to another creature of God, the less to the greater, a human being to an angelic one; and this is not owing to nature, but to a corruption of nature: polluted is the sovereign, polluted also the subject. All this is the fruit of that ancient stock of pollution which he has planted in man; himself being destined to suffer a heavier punishment at the last judgment, as being the more polluted; but at the same time even they who will have to bear a less heavy burden in that condemnation are subjects of him as the prince and author of sin, for there will be no other cause of condemnation than sin.

#### CHAPTER 27 [XXIV.]

THROUGH LUST ORIGINAL SIN IS TRANSMITTED; VENIAL SINS IN MARRIED PERSONS; CONCUPISCENCE OF THE FLESH, THE DAUGHTER AND MOTHER OF SIN

Wherefore the devil holds infants guilty who are born, not of the good by which marriage is good, but of the evil of concupiscence, which, indeed, marriage uses aright, but at which even marriage has occasion to feel shame. Marriage is itself "honourable in all" the goods which properly appertain to it; but even when it has its "bed undefiled" (not only by fornication and adultery, which are damnable disgraces, but also by any of those excesses of cohabitation such as do not arise from any prevailing



desire of children, but from an overbearing lust of pleasure, which are venial sins in man and wife), yet, whenever it comes to the actual process of generation, the very embrace which is lawful and honourable cannot be effected without the ardour of lust, so as to be able to accomplish that which appertains to the use of reason and not of lust. Now, this ardour, whether following or preceding the will, does somehow, by a power of its own, move the members which cannot be moved simply by the will, and in this manner it shows itself not to be the servant of a will which commands it, but rather to be the punishment of a will which disobeys it. It shows, moreover, that it must be excited, not by a free choice, but by a certain seductive stimulus, and that on this very account it produces shame. This is the carnal concupiscence, which, while it is no longer accounted sin in the regenerate, yet in no case happens to nature except from sin. It is the daughter of sin, as it were; and whenever it yields assent to the commission of shameful deeds, it becomes also the mother of many sins. Now from this concupiscence whatever comes into being by natural birth is bound by original sin, unless, indeed, it be born again in Him whom the Virgin conceived without this concupiscence. Wherefore, when He vouchsafed to be born in the flesh, He alone was born without sin.

#### CHAPTER 28 [XXV.]

CONCUPISCENCE REMAINS AFTER BAPTISM, JUST AS LANGUOR DOES AFTER RECOVERY FROM DISEASE; CONCUPISCENCE IS DIMINISHED IN PERSONS OF ADVANCING YEARS, AND INCREASED IN THE INCONTINENT

If the question arises, how this concupiscence of the flesh remains in the regenerate, in whose case has been effected a remission of all sins whatever; seeing that human semination takes place by its means, even when the carnal offspring of even a baptized parent is born: or, at all events, if it may be in the case of a baptized parent concupiscence and not be sin, why should this same concupiscence be sin in the offspring?—the answer to be given is this: Carnal concupiscence is remitted, indeed, in baptism; not so that it is put out of existence, but so that it is not to be imputed for sin. Although its guilt is now taken away, it still remains until our entire infirmity be healed by the advancing renewal of our inner man, day by day, when at last our outward man shall be clothed with incorruption. It does not

remain, however, substantially, as a body, or a spirit; but it is nothing more than a certain affection of an evil quality, such as languor, for instance. There is not, to be sure, anything remaining which may be remitted whenever, as the Scripture says, “the Lord forgiveth all our iniquities.” But until that happens which immediately follows in the same passage, “Who healeth all thine infirmities, who redeemeth thy life from corruption,” there remains this concupiscence of the flesh in the body of this death. Now we are admonished not to obey its sinful desires to do evil: “Let not sin reign in your mortal body.” Still this concupiscence is daily lessened in persons of continence and increasing years, and most of all when old age makes a near approach. The man, however, who yields to it a wicked service, receives such great energies that, even when all his members are now failing through age, and those especial parts of his body are unable to be applied to their proper function, he does not ever cease to revel in a still increasing rage of disgraceful and shameless desire.

#### CHAPTER 29 [XXVI.]

##### HOW CONCUPISCENCE REMAINS IN THE BAPTIZED IN ACT, WHEN IT HAS PASSED AWAY AS TO ITS GUILT

In the case, then, of those persons who are born again in Christ, when they receive an entire remission of all their sins, it is of course necessary that the guilt also of the still indwelling concupiscence should be remitted, in order that (as I said) it should not be imputed to them for sin. For even as in the case of those sins which cannot be themselves permanent, since they pass away as soon as they are committed, the guilt yet is permanent, and (if not remitted) will remain for evermore; so, when the concupiscence is remitted, the guilt of it also is taken away. For not to have sin means this, not to be deemed guilty of sin. If a man have (for example) committed adultery, though he do not repeat the sin, he is held to be guilty of adultery until the indulgence in guilt be itself remitted. He has the sin, therefore, remaining, although the particular act of his sin no longer exists, since it has passed away along with the time when it was committed. For if to desist from sinning were the same thing as not to have sins, it would be sufficient if Scripture were content to give us the simple warning, “My son, hast thou sinned? Do so no more.” This, however, does not suffice, for it goes on to

say, "Ask forgiveness for thy former sins." Sins remain, therefore, if they are not forgiven. But how do they remain if they are passed away? Only thus, they have passed away in their act, but they are permanent in their guilt. Contrariwise, then, may it happen that a thing may remain in act, but pass away in guilt.

#### CHAPTER 30 [XXVII.]

##### THE EVIL DESIRES OF CONCUPISCENCE; WE OUGHT TO WISH THAT THEY MAY NOT BE

For the concupiscence of the flesh is in some sort active, even when it does not exhibit either an assent of the heart, where its seat of empire is, or those members whereby, as its weapons, it fulfils what it is bent on. But what in this action does it effect, unless it be its evil and shameful desires? For if these were good and lawful, the apostle would not forbid obedience to them, saying, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof." He does not say, that ye should have the lusts thereof, but "that ye should obey the lusts thereof;" in order that (as these desires are greater or less in different individuals, according as each shall have progressed in the renewal of the inner man) we may maintain the fight of holiness and chastity, for the purpose of withholding obedience to these lusts. Nevertheless, our wish ought to be nothing less than the nonexistence of these very desires, even if the accomplishment of such a wish be not possible in the body of this death. This is the reason why the same apostle, in another passage, addressing us as if in his own person, gives us this instruction: "For what I would," says he, "that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." In a word, "I covet." For he was unwilling to do this, that he might be perfect on every side. "If, then, I do that which I would not," he goes on to say, "I consent unto the law that it is good." Because the law, too, wills not that which I also would not. For it wills not that I should have concupiscence, for it says, "Thou shall not covet;" and I am no less unwilling to cherish so evil a desire. In this, therefore, there is complete accord between the will of the law and my own will. But because he was unwilling to covet, and yet did covet, and for all that did not by any means obey this concupiscence so as to yield assent to it, he immediately adds

these words: “Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

#### CHAPTER 31 [XXVIII.]

WHO IS THE MAN THAT CAN SAY, “IT IS NO MORE I THAT DO IT”?

A man, however, is much deceived if, while consenting to the lust of his flesh, and then both resolving in his mind to do its desires and setting about it, he supposes that he has still a right to say, “It is not I that do it,” even if he hates and loathes himself for assenting to evil desires. The two things are simultaneous in his case: he hates the thing himself because he knows that it is evil; and yet he does it, because he is bent on doing it. Now if, in addition to all this, he proceeds to do what the Scripture forbids him, when it says, “Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin,” and completes with a bodily act what he was bent on doing in his mind; and says, “It is not I that do the thing, but sin that dwelleth in me,” because he feels displeased with himself for resolving on and accomplishing the deed,—he so greatly errs as not to know his own self. For, whereas he is altogether himself, his mind determining and his body executing his own purpose, he yet supposes that he is himself no longer! [XXIX.] That man, therefore, alone speaks the truth when he says, “It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,” who only feels the concupiscence, and neither resolves on doing it with the consent of his heart, nor accomplishes it with the ministry of his body.

#### CHAPTER 32

WHEN GOOD WILL BE PERFECTLY DONE

The apostle then adds these words: “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perfect that which is good I find not.” Now this is said, because a good thing is not then perfected, when there is an absence of evil desires, as evil is perfected when evil desires are obeyed. But when they are present, but are not obeyed, neither evil is performed, since obedience is not yielded to them; nor good, because of their inoperative presence. There is rather an intermediate condition of things: good is effected in some degree, because

the evil concupiscence has gained no assent to itself; and in some degree there is a remnant of evil, because the concupiscence is present. This accounts for the apostle's precise words. He does not say, To do good is not present to him, but "how to perfect it." For the truth is, one does a good deal of good when he does what the Scripture enjoins, "Go not after thy lusts;" yet he falls short of perfection, in that he fails to keep the great commandment, "Thou shalt not covet." The law said, "Thou shalt not covet," in order that, when we find ourselves lying in this diseased state, we might seek the medicine of Grace, and by that commandment know both in what direction our endeavours should aim as we advance in our present mortal condition, and to what a height it is possible to reach in the future immortality. For unless perfection could somewhere be attained, this commandment would never have been given to us.

#### CHAPTER 33 [XXX.]

##### TRUE FREEDOM COMES WITH WILLING DELIGHT IN GOD'S LAW

The apostle then repeats his former statement, the more fully to recommend its purport: "For the good," says he, "that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Then follows this: "I find then the law, when I would act, to be good to me; for evil is present with me." In other words, I find that the law is a good to me, when I wish to do what the law would have me do; inasmuch as it is not with the law itself (which says, "Thou shalt not covet") that evil is present; no, it is with myself that the evil is present, which I would not do, because I have the concupiscence even in my willingness. "For," he adds, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." This delight with the law of God after the inward man, comes to us from the mighty grace of God; for thereby is our inward man renewed day by day, because it is thereby that progress is made by us with perseverance. In it there is not the fear that has torment, but the love that cheers and gratifies. We are truly free there, where we have no unwilling joy.

## CHAPTER 34

### HOW CONCUISCENCE MADE A CAPTIVE OF THE APOSTLE; WHAT THE LAW OF SIN WAS TO THE APOSTLE

Then, indeed, this statement, “I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind,” refers to that very concupiscence which we are now speaking of—the law of sin in our sinful flesh. But when he said, “And bringing me into captivity to the law of sin,” that is, to its own self, “which is in my members,” he either meant “bringing me into captivity,” in the sense of endeavouring to make me captive, that is, urging me to approve and accomplish evil desire; or rather (and this opens no controversy), in the sense of leading me captive according to the flesh, and, if this is not possessed by the carnal concupiscence which he calls the law of sin, no unlawful desire—such as our mind ought not to obey—would, of course, be there to excite and disturb. The fact, however, that the apostle does not say, Bringing my flesh into captivity, but “Bringing me into captivity,” leads us to look out for some other meaning for the phrase, and to understand the term “bringing me into captivity” as if he had said, endeavouring to make me captive. But why, after all, might he not say, “Bringing me into captivity,” and at the same time mean us to understand his flesh? Was it not spoken by one concerning Jesus, when His flesh was not found in the sepulchre: “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him”? Was Mary’s then an improper question, because she said, “My Lord,” and not “My Lord’s body” or “flesh”?

## CHAPTER 35 [XXXI.]

### THE FLESH, CARNAL AFFECTION

But we have in the apostle’s own language, a little before, a sufficiently clear proof that he might have meant his flesh when he said, “Bringing me into captivity.” For after declaring, “I know that in me dwelleth no good thing,” he at once added an explanatory sentence to this effect, “That is, in my flesh.” It is then the flesh, in which there dwells nothing good, that is brought into captivity to the law of sin. Now he designates that as the flesh wherein lies a certain morbid carnal affection, not the mere conformation of our bodily fabric whose members are not to be used as weapons for sin—

that is, for that very concupiscence which holds this flesh of ours captive. So far, indeed, as concerns this actual bodily substance and nature of ours, it is already God's temple in all faithful men, whether living in marriage or in continence. If, however, absolutely nothing of our flesh were in captivity, not even to the devil, because there has accrued to it the remission of sin, that sin be not imputed to it (and this is properly designated the law of sin); yet if under this law of sin, that is, under its own concupiscence, our flesh were not to some degree held captive, how could that be true which the apostle states, when he speaks of our "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"? In so far, then, as there is now this waiting for the redemption of our body, there is also in some degree still existing something in us which is a captive to the law of sin. Accordingly he exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." What are we to understand by such language, but that our body, which is undergoing corruption, weighs heavily on our soul? When, therefore, this very body of ours shall be restored to us in an incorrupt state, there shall be a full liberation from the body of this death; but there will be no such deliverance for them who shall rise again to condemnation. To the body of this death then is understood to be owing the circumstance that there is in our members another law which wars against the law of the mind, so long as the flesh lusts against the spirit—without, however, subjugating the mind, inasmuch as on its side, too, the spirit has a concupiscence contrary to the flesh. Thus, although the actual law of sin partly holds the flesh in captivity (whence comes its resistance to the law of the mind), still it has not an absolute empire in our body, notwithstanding its mortal state, since it refuses obedience to its desires. For in the case of hostile armies between whom there is an earnest conflict, even the side which is inferior in the fight usually holds a something which it has captured; and although in some such way there is somewhat in our flesh which is kept under the law of sin, yet it has before it the hope of redemption: and then there will remain not a particle of this corrupt concupiscence; but our flesh, healed of that diseased plague, and wholly clad in immortality, shall live for evermore in eternal blessedness.

## CHAPTER 36

EVEN NOW WHILE WE STILL HAVE CONCUPISCENCE WE MAY BE SAFE IN CHRIST

But the apostle pursues the subject, and says, “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin;” which must be thus understood: “With my mind I serve the law of God,” by refusing my consent to the law of sin; “with my flesh, however,” I serve “the law of sin,” by having the desires of sin, from which I am not yet entirely freed, although I yield them no assent. Then let us observe carefully what he has said after all the above: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Even now, says he, when the law in my members keeps up its warfare against the law of my mind, and retains in captivity somewhat in the body of this death, there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. And listen why: “For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” says he, “hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” How made me free, except by abolishing its sentence of guilt by the remission of all my sins; so that, though it still remains, only daily lessening more and more, it is nevertheless not imputed to me as sin?

## CHAPTER 37 [XXXII.]

THE LAW OF SIN WITH ITS GUILT IN UNBAPTIZED INFANTS. BY ADAM’S SIN THE HUMAN RACE HAS BECOME A “WILD OLIVE TREE.”

Until, then, this remission of sins takes place in the offspring, they have within them the law of sin in such manner, that it is really imputed to them as sin; in other words, with that law there is attaching to them its sentence of guilt, which holds them debtors to eternal condemnation. For what a parent transmits to his carnal offspring is the condition of his own carnal birth, not that of his spiritual new birth. For, that he was born in the flesh, although no hindrance after the remission of his guilt to his fruit, still remains hidden, as it were, in the seed of the olive, even though, because of the remission of his sins, it in no respect injures the oil—that is, in plain language, his life which he lives, “righteous by faith,” after Christ, whose very name comes from the oil, that is, from the anointing. That, however, which in the case of a regenerate parent, as in the seed of the pure olive, is covered without any guilt, which has been remitted, is still no doubt



retained in the case of his offspring, which is yet unregenerate, as in the wild olive, with all its guilt, until here also it be remitted by the self-same grace. When Adam sinned, he was changed from that pure olive, which had no such corrupt seed whence should spring the bitter issue of the wild olive, into a wild olive tree; and, inasmuch as his sin was so great, that by it his nature became commensurately changed for the worse, he converted the entire race of man into a wild olive stock. The effect of this change we see illustrated, as has been said above, in the instance of these very trees. Whenever God's grace converts a sapling into a good olive, so that the fault of the first birth (that original sin which had been derived and contracted from the concupiscence of the flesh) is remitted, covered, and not imputed, there is still inherent in it that nature from which is born a wild olive, unless it, too, by the same grace, is by the second birth changed into a good olive.

#### CHAPTER 38 [XXXIII.]

TO BAPTISM MUST BE REFERRED ALL REMISSION OF SINS, AND THE COMPLETE HEALING OF THE RESURRECTION. DAILY CLEANSING

Blessed, therefore, is the olive tree "whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;" blessed is it "to which the Lord hath not imputed sin." But this, which has received the remission, the covering, and the acquittal, even up to the complete change into an eternal immortality, still retains a secret force which furnishes seed for a wild and bitter olive tree, unless the same tillage of God prunes it also, by remission, covering, and acquittal. There will, however, be left no corruption at all in even carnal seed, when the same regeneration, which is now effected through the sacred laver, purges and heals all man's evil to the very end. By its means the very same flesh, through which the carnal mind was formed, shall become spiritual,—no longer having that carnal lust which resists the law of the mind, no longer emitting carnal seed. For in this sense must be understood that which the apostle whom we have so often quoted says elsewhere: "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." It must, I say, be understood as implying, that by this laver of regeneration and word of sanctification all the evils of regenerate men of

whatever kind are cleansed and healed,—not the sins only which are all now remitted in baptism, but those also which after baptism are committed by human ignorance and frailty; not, indeed, that baptism is to be repeated as often as sin is repeated, but that by its one only ministration it comes to pass that pardon is secured to the faithful of all their sins both before and after their regeneration. For of what use would repentance be, either before baptism, if baptism did not follow; or after it, if it did not precede? Nay, in the Lord's Prayer itself, which is our daily cleansing, of what avail or advantage would it be for that petition to be uttered, "Forgive us our debts," unless it be by such as have been baptized? And in like manner, how great soever be the liberality and kindness of a man's alms, what, I ask, would they profit him towards the remission of his sins if he had not been baptized? In short, on whom but on the baptized shall be bestowed the very felicities of the kingdom of heaven; where the Church shall have no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; where there shall be nothing blameworthy, nothing unreal; where there shall be not only no guilt for sin, but no concupiscence to excite it?

#### CHAPTER 39 [XXXIV.]

BY THE HOLINESS OF BAPTISM, NOT SINS ONLY, BUT ALL EVILS WHATSOEVER, HAVE TO BE REMOVED. THE CHURCH IS NOT YET FREE FROM ALL STAIN

And thus not only all the sins, but all the ills of men of what kind soever, are in course of removal by the holiness of that Christian laver whereby Christ cleanses His Church, that He may present it to Himself, not in this world, but in that which is to come, as not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Now there are some who maintain that such is the Church even now, and yet they are in it. Well then, since they confess that they have some sins themselves, if they say the truth in this (and, of course, they do, as they are not free from sins), then the Church has "a spot" in them; whilst if they tell an untruth in their confession (as speaking from a double heart), then the Church has in them "a wrinkle." If, however, they assert that it is themselves, and not the Church, which has all this, they then as good as acknowledge that they are not its members, nor belong to its body, so that they are even condemned by their own confession.

## CHAPTER 40 [XXXV.]

REFUTATION OF THE PELAGIANS BY THE AUTHORITY OF ST. AMBROSE, WHOM THEY QUOTE TO SHOW THAT THE DESIRE OF THE FLESH IS A NATURAL GOOD

In respect, however, to this concupiscence of the flesh, we have striven in this lengthy discussion to distinguish it accurately from the goods of marriage. This we have done on account of our modern heretics, who cavil whenever concupiscence is censured, as if it involved a censure of marriage. Their object is to praise concupiscence as a natural good, that so they may defend their own baneful dogma, which asserts that those who are born by its means do not contract original sin. Now the blessed Ambrose, bishop of Milan, by whose priestly office I received the washing of regeneration, briefly spoke on this matter, when, expounding the prophet Isaiah, he gathered from him the nativity of Christ in the flesh: “Thus,” says the bishop, “He was both tempted in all points as a man, and in the likeness of man He bare all things; but inasmuch as He was born of the Spirit, He kept Himself from sin. For every man is a liar; and there is none without sin but God alone. It has, therefore, been ever firmly maintained, that it is clear that no man from husband and wife, that is to say, by means of that conjunction of their persons, is free from sin. He who is free from sin is also free from conception of this kind.” Well now, what is it which St. Ambrose has here condemned in the true doctrine of this deliverance?—is it the goodness of marriage, or not rather the worthless opinion of these heretics, although they had not then come upon the stage? I have thought it worth while to adduce this testimony, because Pelagius mentions Ambrose with such commendation as to say: “The blessed Bishop Ambrose, in whose writings more than anywhere else the Roman faith is clearly stated, has flourished like a beautiful flower among the Latin writers. His fidelity and extremely pure perception of the sense of Scripture no opponent even has ever ventured to impugn.” I hope he may regret having entertained opinions opposed to Ambrose, but not that he has bestowed this praise on that holy man.

Here, then, you have my book, which, owing to its tedious length and difficult subject, it has been as troublesome for me to compose as for you to read, in those little snatches of time in which you have been able (or at

least, as I suppose, have been able) to find yourself at leisure. Although it has been indeed drawn up with considerable labour amidst my ecclesiastical duties, as God has vouchsafed to give me His help, I should hardly have intruded it on your notice, with all your public cares, if I had not been informed by a godly man, who has an intimate knowledge of you, that you take such pleasure in reading as to lie awake by the hour, night after night, spending the precious time in your favourite pursuit.

#### PRELIMINARY NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK

(1) From the Preface of Augustin's "Unfinished Work Against Julianus."

I Wrote a treatise, under the title On Marriage and Concupiscence, and addressed it to the Count Valerius, on learning that he had been informed of the Pelagians that they charge us with condemning marriage. Now in that treatise I showed the distinction, as critically and accurately as I was able, between the good of marriage and the evil of carnal concupiscence,—an evil which is well used by conjugal chastity. On receiving my treatise, the illustrious man whom I have named sent me in a short paper a few sentences culled from a work of Julianus, a Pelagian heretic. In this work he has thought fit to extend to four books his answer to the before-mentioned treatise of mine, which is limited to one book only, On Marriage and Concupiscence. I do not know to whom we were indebted for the said extracts: he confined his selection, evidently on purpose, to the first book of Julianus' work. At the request of Valerius, I lost no time in drawing up my answer to the extracts. And thus it happened that I have written a second book also under the same title; and in reply to this Julianus has drawn up to eight books, in excess of his loquacious powers.

(2) From Augustin's Epistle to Claudius [CCVII.].

"Whoever has perused this second book of mine, addressed (as the first was) to the Count Valerius, and drawn up (as, indeed, both were) for his use, will have discovered that there are some points in which I have not answered Julianus, but that I meant my work rather for him who made the extracts from that writer's books, and who did not arrange them in the order in which he found them. He deemed some considerable alteration necessary

in his arrangement, very probably with the view of appropriating by this method as his own the thoughts which evidently were another person's.”

## Book II

Augustin, in this latter book, refutes sundry sentences which had been culled by some unknown author from the first of four books that Julianus had published in opposition to the former book of his treatise “On Marriage and Concupiscence;” which sentences had been forwarded to him at the instance of the Count Valerius. He vindicates the Catholic doctrine of original sin from his opponent’s cavils and subtleties, and particularly shows how diverse it is from the infamous heresy of the Manicheans.

### CHAPTER 1 [I.]

#### INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

I Cannot tell you, dearly loved and honoured son Valerius, how great is the pleasure which my heart receives when I hear of your warm and earnest interest in the testimony of the word of God against the heretics; and this, too, amidst your military duties and the cares which devolve on you in the eminent position you so justly occupy, and the pressing functions, moreover, of your political life. After reading the letter of your Eminence, in which you acknowledge the book which I dedicated to you, I was roused to write this also; for you request me to attend to the statement, which my brother and fellow-bishop Alypius is commissioned to make to me, about the discussion which is being raised by the heretics over sundry passages of my book. Not only have I received this information from the narrative of my said brother, but I have also read the extracts which he produced, and which you had yourself forwarded to Rome, after his departure from Ravenna. On discovering the boastful language of our adversaries, as I could easily do in these extracts, I determined, with the help of the Lord, to reply to their taunts with all the truthfulness and scriptural authority that I could command.

## CHAPTER 2 [II.]

IN THIS AND THE FOUR NEXT CHAPTERS HE ADDUCES THE GARBLED EXTRACTS HE HAS TO CONSIDER

The paper which I now answer starts with this title: “Headings out of a book written by Augustin, in reply to which I have culled a few passages out of books.” I perceive from this that the person who forwarded these written papers to your Excellency wanted to make his extracts out of the books he does not name, with a view, so far as I can judge, to getting a quicker answer, in order that he might not delay your urgency. Now, after considering what books they were which he meant, I suppose that it must have been those which Julianus mentioned in the Epistle he sent to Rome, a copy of which found its way to me at the same time. For he there says: “They go so far as to allege that marriage, now in dispute, was not instituted by God,—a declaration which may be read in a work of Augustin’s, to which I have lately replied in a treatise of four books.” These are the books, as I believe, from which the extracts were taken. It would, then, have been perhaps the better course if I had set myself deliberately to disprove and refute that entire work of his, which he spread out into four volumes. But I was most unwilling to delay my answer, even as you yourself lost no time in forwarding to me the written statements which I was requested to reply to.

## CHAPTER 3

THE SAME CONTINUED

The words which he has quoted and endeavoured to refute out of my book, which I sent to you, and with which you are very well acquainted, are the following: “They are constantly affirming, in their excessive hatred of us, that we condemn marriage and that divine procedure by which God creates human beings by means of men and women, inasmuch as we maintain that they who are born of such a union contract original sin, and do not deny that, of whatever parents they are born, they are still under the devil’s dominion unless they be born again in Christ.” Now, in quoting these words of mine, he took care to omit the testimony of the apostle, which I adduced by the weighty significance of which he felt himself too hard pressed. For,

after saying that men at their birth contract original sin, I at once introduced the apostle's words: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all men sinned." Well, as I have already mentioned, he omitted this passage of the apostle, and then closed up the other remarks of mine which have been now quoted. For he knew too well how acceptable to the hearts and consciences of all faithful catholics are these words of the apostle, which I had adopted, but which he omitted,—words which are so direct and so clear, that these new-fangled heretics use every effort in their dark and tortuous glosses to obscure and deprave their force.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### THE SAME CONTINUED

But he has added other words of mine, where I have said: "Nor do they reflect that the good of marriage is no more impeachable by reason of the original evil which is derived therefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication can be excused by reason of the natural good which is born of them. For as sin is the work of the devil, whether derived from this source or from that; so is man, whether born of this or that, the work of God." Here, too, he has left out some words, in which he was afraid of catholic ears. For to come to the words here quoted, it had previously been said by us: "Because, then, we affirm this doctrine, which is contained in the oldest and unvarying rule of the catholic faith, these propounders of novel and perverse dogmas, who deny that there is in infants any sin to be washed away in the laver of regeneration, in their unbelief or ignorance calumniate us as if we condemned marriage, and as if we asserted to be the devil's work what is God's own work, to wit, the human being which is born of marriage." All this passage he has passed over, and merely quoted the words which follow it, as given above. Now, in the omitted words he was afraid of the clause which suits all hearts in the catholic Church and appeals to the very faith which has been firmly established and transmitted from ancient times with unfaltering voice and excites their hostility most strongly against us. The clause is this: "They deny that there is in infants any sin to be washed away in the laver of regeneration." For all persons run to church with their infants for no other reason in the world than that the original sin



which is contracted in them by their first and natural birth may be cleansed by the regeneration of their second birth.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE SAME CONTINUED

He then returns to our words, which were quoted before: “We maintain that they who are born of such a union contract original sin; and we do not deny that, of whatever parents they are born, they are still under the devil’s dominion unless they be born again in Christ.” Why he should again refer to these words of ours I cannot tell; he had already cited them a little before. He then proceeds to quote what we said of Christ: “Who willed not to be born from the same union of the two sexes.” But here again he quietly ignored the words which I placed just previous to these words; my entire sentence being this: “That by His grace they may be removed from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Him who willed not to be born from the same union of the two sexes.” Observe, I pray you, what my words were which he shunned, in the temper of one who is thoroughly opposed to that grace of God which comes through our “Lord Jesus Christ.” He knows well enough that it is the height of improbity and impiety to exclude infants from their interest in the apostle’s words, where he said of God the Father: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear son.” This, no doubt, is the reason why he preferred to omit rather than quote these words.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE SAME CONTINUED

He has next adduced that passage of ours, wherein we said: “For there would have been none of this shame-producing concupiscence, which is impudently praised by impudent men, if man had not previously sinned; while as to marriage, it would still have existed, even if no man had sinned: for the procreation of children would have been effected without this disease.” Up to this point he cited my words; but he shrank from adding what comes next—”in the body of that chaste life, although without it this cannot be done in the body of this death.”“ He would not complete my

sentence, but mutilated it somewhat, because he dreaded the apostle's exclamation, of which my words gave him a reminder: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." For the body of this death existed not in paradise before sin; therefore did we say, "In the body of that chaste life," which was the life of paradise, "the procreation of children could have been effected without the disease, without which now in the body of this death it cannot be done." The apostle, however, before arriving at that mention of man's misery and God's grace which we have just quoted, had first said: "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Then it is that he exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In the body of this death, therefore, such as it was in paradise before sin, there certainly was not "another law in our members warring against the law of our mind"—which now, even when we are unwilling, and withhold consent, and use not our members to fulfil that which it desires, still dwells in these members, and harasses our resisting and repugnant mind. And this conflict in itself, although not involving condemnation, because it does not consummate sin, is nevertheless "wretched," inasmuch as it has no peace. I think, then, that I have shown you clearly enough that this man had a special object as well as method in quoting my words: he adduced them for refutation in such manner as in some instances to interrupt the context of my sentences by removing what stood between them, and in other instances to curtail them by withdrawing their concluding words; and his reason for doing all this I think I have sufficiently explained.

#### CHAPTER 7 [III.]

AUGUSTIN ADDUCES A PASSAGE SELECTED FROM THE PREFACE OF JULIANUS. (SEE "THE UNFINISHED WORK," I. 73.)

Let us now look at those words of ours which he adduced just as it suited him, and to which he would oppose his own. For they are followed by his words; moreover, as the person insinuated who sent you the paper of extracts, he copied something out of a preface, which was no doubt the

preface of the books from which he selected a few passages. The paragraph thus copied stands as follows: “The teachers of our day, most holy brother, who are the instigators of the disgraceful faction which is now overheated with its zeal, are determined on compassing the injury and discredit of the men with whose sacred fervour they are set on fire, by nothing less than the ruin of the whole Church; little thinking how much honour they have conferred on those whose renown they have shown to be only capable of being destroyed along with the catholic religion. For, if one should say, either that there is free will in man, or that God is the Creator of those that are born, he is at once set down as a Coelestian and a Pelagian. To avoid being called heretics, they turn Manicheans; and so, whilst shirking a pretended infamy, they incur a real reproach; just like the animals, which in hunting they surround with dyed feathers, in order to scare and drive them into their nets; the poor brutes are not gifted with reason, and so they are thrust all together by a vain panic into a real destruction.”

## CHAPTER 8

### AUGUSTIN REFUTES THE PASSAGE ADDUCED ABOVE

Well, now, whoever you are that have said all this, what you say is by no means true; by no means, I repeat; you are much deceived, or you aim at deceiving others. We do not deny free will; but, even as the Truth declares, “if the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed.” It is yourselves who invidiously deny this Liberator, since you ascribe a vain liberty to yourselves in your captivity. Captives you are; for “of whom a man is overcome,” as the Scripture says, “of the same is he brought in bondage;” and no one except by the grace of the great Liberator is loosed from the chain of this bondage, from which no man living is free. For “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all have sinned.” Thus, then, God is the Creator of those that are born in such wise that all pass from the one into condemnation, who have not the One Liberator by regeneration. For He is described as “the Potter, forming out of the same lump one vessel unto honour in His mercy, and another unto dishonour in judgment.” And so runs the Church’s canticle “mercy and judgment.” You are therefore only misleading yourself and others when you say, “If one should affirm, either

that there is free will in man, or that God is the Creator of those that are born, he is at once set down as a Coelestian and a Pelagian;" for the catholic faith says these things. If, however, any one says that there is a free will in man for worshipping God aright, without His assistance; and whosoever says that God is the Creator of those that are born in such wise as to deny that infants have any need of one to redeem them from the power of the devil: that is the man who is set down as a disciple of Coelestius and Pelagius. Therefore that men have within them a free will, and that God is the Creator of those that are born, are propositions which we both allow. You are not Coelestians and Pelagians for merely saying this. But what you do really say is this, that any man whatever has freedom enough of will for doing good without God's help, and that infants undergo no such change as being "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God;" and because you say so, you are Coelestians and Pelagians. Why, then, do you hide under the covering of a common dogma for deceit, concealing your own especial delinquency which has gained for you a party-name; and why, to terrify the ignorant with a shocking term, do you say of us, "To avoid being called heretics, they turn Manicheans?"

## CHAPTER 9

### THE CATHOLICS MAINTAIN THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN, AND THUS ARE FAR FROM BEING MANICHEANS

Listen, then, for a little while, and observe what is involved in this question. Catholics say that human nature was created good by the good God as Creator; but that, having been corrupted by sin, it needs the physician Christ. The Manicheans affirm, that human nature was not created by God good, and corrupted by sin; but that man was formed by the prince of eternal darkness of a mixture of two natures which had ever existed—one good and the other evil. The Pelagians and Coelestians say that human nature was created good by the good God; but that it is still so sound and healthy in infants at their birth, that they have no need at that age of Christ's medicine. Recognise, then, your name in your dogma; and cease from intruding upon the catholics, who refute you, a name and a dogma which belong to others. For truth rejects both parties—the Manicheans and yourselves. To the Manicheans it says: "Have ye not read that He which

made man at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Now Christ shows, in this passage, that God is both the Creator of man, and the uniter in marriage of husband and wife; whereas the Manicheans deny both these propositions. To you, however, He says: “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.” But you, admirable Christians as you are, answer Christ: “If you came to seek and to save that which was lost, then you did not come for infants; for they were not lost, but are born in a state of salvation: go to older men; we give you a rule from your own words: They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” Now, as it happens, the Manichean, who says that man has evil mixed in his nature, must wish his good soul at any rate to be saved by Christ; whereas you contend that there is in infants nothing to be sired by Christ, since they are already safe. And thus the Manichean besets human nature with his detestable censure, and you with your cruel praise. For whosoever shall believe your laudation, will never bring their babes to the Saviour. Entertaining such impious views as these, of what use is it that you fearlessly face that which is enacted for you in order to induce salutary fear and to treat you as a human being, and not as that poor animal of yours which was surrounded with the coloured feathers to be driven into the hunting toils? Need was that you should hold the truth, and, on account of zeal for it, have no fear; but, as things are, you evade fear in such wise that, if you feared, you would rather run away from the net of the malignant one than run into it. The reason why your catholic mother alarms you is, because she fears for both you and others from you; and if by the help of her sons who possess any authority in the State she acts with a view to make you afraid, she does so, not from cruelty, but from love. You, however, are a very brave man; and you deem it the coward’s part to be afraid of men. Well then, fear God; and do not try with such obstinacy to subvert the ancient foundations of the catholic faith. Although I could even wish that spirited temper of yours would entertain some little fear of human authority, at least in the present case. I could wish, I say, that it would rather tremble through cowardice than perish through audacity.

## CHAPTER 10 [IV.]

### IN WHAT MANNER THE ADVERSARY'S CAVILS MUST BE REFUTED

Let us now look at the rest of what he has joined together in his selections. But what should be my course of proceeding? Ought I to set forth every passage of his for the purpose of answering it, or, omitting everything which the catholic faith contains, as not in dispute between us, only handle and confute those statements in which he strays away from the beaten path of truth, and endeavours to graft on catholic stems the poisonous shoots of his Pelagian heresy? This is, no doubt, the easier course. But I suppose I must not lose sight of a possible contingency, that any one, after reading my book, without perusing all that has been alleged by him, may think that I was unwilling to bring forward the passages on which his allegations depend, and by which are shown to be truly deduced the statements which I am controverting as false. I should be glad, therefore, if the reader will without exception kindly observe and consider the two classes of contributions which occur in this little work of ours—that is to say, all that he has alleged, and the answers which on my side I give him.

## CHAPTER 11

### THE DEVIL THE AUTHOR, NOT OF NATURE, BUT ONLY OF SIN

Now, the man who forwarded to your Love the paper in question has introduced the contents thereof with this title: “In opposition to those persons who condemn matrimony, and ascribe its fruits to the devil.” This, then, is not in opposition to us, who neither condemn matrimony, which we even commend in its order with a just commendation, nor ascribe its fruits to the devil. For the fruits of matrimony are men which are orderly engendered from it, and not the sins which accompany their birth. Human beings are not under the devil’s dominion because they are human beings, in which respect they are the fruits of matrimony; but because they are sinful, in which resides the transmission of their sins. For the devil is the author of sin, not of nature.

## CHAPTER 12

### EVE'S NAME MEANS LIFE, AND IS A GREAT SACRAMENT OF THE CHURCH

Now, observe the rest of the passage in which he thinks he finds, to our prejudice, what is consonant with the above-quoted title. "God," says he, "who had framed Adam out of the dust of the ground, formed Eve out of his rib, and said, She shall be called Life, because she is the mother of all who live." Well now, it is not so written. But what matters that to us? For it constantly happens that our memory fails in verbal accuracy, while the sense is still maintained. Nor was it God, but her husband, who gave Eve her name, which should signify Life; for thus it is written: "And Adam called his wife's name Life, because she is the mother of all living." But very likely he might have understood the Scripture as testifying that God gave Eve this name through Adam, as His prophet. For in that she was called Life, and the mother of all living, there lies a great sacrament of the Church, of which it would detain us long to speak, and which is unnecessary to our present undertaking. The very same thing which the apostle says, "This is a great sacrament: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church," was also spoken by Adam when he said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh." The Lord Jesus, however, in the Gospel mentions God as having said this of Eve; and the reason, no doubt, is, that God declared through the man what the man, in fact, uttered as a prophecy. Now, observe what follows in the paper of extracts: "By that primitive name," says he, "He showed for what labour the woman had been provided; and He said accordingly, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." "Now, who amongst ourselves denies that the woman was provided for the work of child-bearing by the Lord God, the beneficent Creator of all good? See further what he goes on to say: "God, therefore, who created them male and female, furnished them with members suitable for procreation, and ordained that bodies should be produced from bodies; and yet is security for their capacity for effecting the work, executing all that exists with that power which He used in creation." Well, even this we acknowledge to be catholic doctrine, as we also do with regard to the passage which he immediately subjoins: "If, then, offspring comes only through sex, and sex

only through the body, and the body through God, who can hesitate to allow that fecundity is rightly attributed to God?”

#### CHAPTER 13

##### THE PELAGIAN ARGUMENT TO SHOW THAT THE DEVIL HAS NO RIGHTS IN THE FRUITS OF MARRIAGE

After these true and catholic statements, which are, moreover, really contained in the Holy Scriptures, although they are not adduced by him in a catholic spirit, with the earnestness of a catholic mind, he loses no time in introducing to us the heresy of Pelagius and Coelestius, for which purpose he wrote, indeed, his previous remarks. Mark carefully the following words: “You now who say, We do not deny that they, are still, of whatever parents born, under the devil’s power, unless they be born again in Christ,’ show us what the devil can recognise as his own in the sexes, by reason of which he can (to use your phrase) rightly claim as his property the fruit which they produce. Is it the difference of the sexes? But this is inherent in the bodies which God made. Is it their union? But this union is justified in the privilege of the primeval blessing no less than institution. For it is the voice of God that says, A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh.’ It is again the voice of God which says, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.’ Or is it, perchance, their fertility? But this is the very reason why matrimony was instituted.”

#### CHAPTER 14 [V.]

##### CONCUPISCENCE ALONE, IN MARRIAGE, IS NOT OF GOD

You see the terms of his question to us: what the devil can find in the sexes to call his own, by reason of which they should be in his power, who are born of parents of whatsoever kind, unless they be born again in Christ; he asks us, moreover, whether it is the difference in the sexes which we ascribe to the devil, or their union, or their very fruitfulness. We answer, then, nothing of these qualities, inasmuch as the difference of sex belongs to “the vessels” of the parents; while the union of the two pertains to the procreation of children; and their fruitfulness to the blessing pronounced on



the marriage institution. But all these things are of God; yet amongst them he was unwilling to name that “lust of the flesh, which is not of the Father, but is of the world;” and “of this world” the devil is said to be “the prince.” Now, the devil found no carnal concupiscence in the Lord, because the Lord did not come as a man to men by its means. Accordingly, He says Himself: “The prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me”—nothing, that is, of sin; neither that which is derived from birth, nor that which is added during life. Among all the natural goods of procreation which he mentioned, he was, I repeat, unwilling to name this particular fact of concupiscence, over which even marriage blushes, which glories in all these before-mentioned goods. For why is the especial work of parents withdrawn and hidden even from the eyes of their children, except that it is impossible for them to be occupied in laudable procreation without shameful lust? Because of this it was that even they were ashamed who first covered their nakedness. These portions of their person were not suggestive of shame before, but deserved to be commended and praised as the work of God. They put on their covering when they felt their shame, and they felt their shame when, after their own disobedience to their Maker, they felt their members disobedient to themselves. Our quoter of extracts likewise felt ashamed of this concupiscence. For he mentioned the difference of the sexes; he mentioned also their union, and he mentioned their fertility; but this last concomitant of lust he blushed to mention. And no wonder if mere talkers are ashamed of that which we see parents themselves, so interested in their function, blush to think of.

## CHAPTER 15

MAN, BY BIRTH, IS PLACED UNDER THE DOMINION OF THE DEVIL THROUGH SIN; WE WERE ALL ONE IN ADAM WHEN HE SINNED

He then proceeds to ask: “Why, then, are they in the devil’s power whom God created?” And he finds an answer to his own question apparently from a phrase of mine. “Because of sin,” says he, “not because of nature.” Then framing his answer in reference to mine, he says: “But as there cannot be offspring without the sexes, so there cannot be sin without the will.” Yes, indeed, such is the truth. For even as “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so also has death passed through to all men, for in

him all have sinned.” By the evil will of that one man all sinned in him, since all were that one man, from whom, therefore, they individually derived original sin. “For you allege,” says he, “that the reason why they are in the devil’s power is because they are born of the union of the two sexes.” I plainly aver that it is by reason of transgression that they are in the devil’s power, and that their participation, moreover, of this transgression is due to the circumstance that they are born of the said union of the sexes, which cannot even accomplish its own honourable function without the incident of shameful lust. This has also, in fact, been said by Ambrose, of most blessed memory, bishop of the church in Milan, when he gives as the reason why Christ’s birth in the flesh was free from all sinful fault, that His conception was not the result of a union of the two sexes; whereas there is not one among human beings conceived in such union who is without sin. These are his precise words: “On that account, and being man, He was tried by every sort of temptation, and in the likeness of man He bore them all; inasmuch, however, as He was born of the Spirit, He abstained from all sin. For every man is a liar, and none is without sin, but God only. It has accordingly,” adds he, “been constantly observed, that clearly no one who is born of a man and a woman, that is to say, through the union of their bodies, is free from sin; for whoever is free from sin is free also from conception of this kind.” Well now, will you dare, ye disciples of Pelagius and Coelestius, to call this man a Manichean? as the heretic Jovinian did, when the holy bishop maintained the permanent virginity of the blessed Mary even after child-bearing, in opposition to this man’s impiety. If, however, you do not dare to call him a Manichean, why do you call us Manicheans when we defend the catholic faith in the self-same cause and with the self same opinions? But if you will taunt that most faithful man with having entertained Manichean error in this matter, there is no help for it, you must enjoy your taunts as best you may, and so fill up Jovinian’s measure more fully; as for ourselves, we can patiently endure along with such a man of God your taunts and jibes. And yet your heresiarch Pelagius commends Ambrose’s faith and extreme purity in the knowledge of the Scriptures so greatly, as to declare that not even an enemy could venture to find fault with him. Observe, then, to what length you have gone, and refrain from following any further in the audacious steps of Jovinian. And yet that man, although by his excessive commendation of marriage he put it on a par with

holy virginity, never denied the necessity of Christ to save those who are born of marriage even fresh from their mother's womb, and to redeem them from the power of the devil. This, however, you deny; and because we oppose you in defence of those who cannot yet speak for themselves, and in defence of the very foundations of the catholic faith, you taunt us, with being Manicheans. But let us now see what comes next.

#### CHAPTER 16 [VI.]

##### IT IS NOT OF US, BUT OUR SINS, THAT THE DEVIL IS THE AUTHOR

He puts to us, then, another question, saying, "Whom, then, do you confess to be the author of infants? The true God?" I answer: "Yes; the true God." He then remarks, "But He did not make evil;" and again asks, "Whether we confess the devil to be the creator of infants?" Then again he answers, "But he did not create human nature." He then closes the subject, as it were, with this inference: "Since union is evil, and the condition of our bodies is degraded, therefore you ascribe our bodies to an evil creator." My answer to this is, I do not ascribe to an evil creator our bodies, but our sins; by reason of which it came to pass that, whereas in our bodies, that is to say, in what God has made, all was honourable and well-pleasing, there yet accrued in the intercourse of male and female what caused shame, so that their union was not such as might have been in the body of that unimpaired life, but such as we see with a blush in the body of this death. "But God," says he, "has divided in sex what He would unite in operation. So that from Him comes the union of bodies, from whom first came the creation of bodies." We have already furnished an answer to this statement, when we said that these bodies are of God. But as regards the disobedience of the members of these bodies, this comes through the lust of the flesh which "is not of the Father." He goes on to say, that "it is impossible for evil fruits to spring from so many good things, such as bodies, sexes, and their unions; or that human beings should be made by God for the purpose of their being, by lawful right, as you maintain, held in possession by the devil." Now it has been already affirmed, that they are not thus held because they are men, which designation belongs to their nature, of which the devil is not the author; but because they are sinners, which designation is the result of that fault of nature of which the devil is the author.

## CHAPTER 17 [VII.]

THE PELAGIANS ARE NOT ASHAMED TO EULOGIZE CONCUPISCENCE, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE ASHAMED TO MENTION ITS NAME

But among so many names of good things, such as bodies, sexes, unions, he never once mentions the lust or concupiscence of the flesh. He is silent, because he is ashamed; and yet with a strange shamelessness of shame (if the expression may be used), he is not ashamed to praise what he is ashamed to mention. Now just observe how he prefers to point to his object by circumlocution rather than by direct mention of it. “After that the man,” says he, “by natural appetite knew his wife.” See again, he refused to say, He knew his wife by carnal concupiscence; but he used the phrase, “by natural appetite,” by which it is open to us to understand that holy and honourable will which wills the procreation of children, and not that lust, of which even he is so much ashamed, forsooth, that he prefers to use ambiguous language to us, to expressing his mind in un mistakeable words. “Now what is the meaning of his phrase—”by natural appetite”? Is not both the wish to be saved and the wish to beget, nourish, and educate children, natural appetite? and is it not likewise of reason, and not of lust? Since, however, we can ascertain his intention, we are pretty sure that he meant by these words to indicate the lust of the organs of generation. Do not the words in question appear to you to be the fig-leaves, under cover of which is hidden nothing else but that which he feels ashamed of? For just as they of old sewed the leaves together as a girdle of concealment, so has this man woven a web of circumlocution to hide his meaning. Let him weave out his statement: “But when the man knew his wife by natural appetite, the divine Scripture says, Eve conceived, and bare a son, and called his name Cain. But what,” he adds, “does Adam say? Let us hear: I have obtained a man from God. So that it is evident that he was God’s work, and the divine Scripture testifies to his having been received from God.” Well, who can entertain a doubt on this point? Who can deny this statement, especially if he be a catholic Christian? A man is God’s work; but carnal concupiscence (without which, if sin had not preceded, man would have been begotten by means of the organs of generation, not less obedient than the other members to a quiet and normal will) is not of the Father, but is of the world.

## CHAPTER 18

### THE SAME CONTINUED

But now, I pray you, look a little more attentively, and observe how he contrives to find a name wherewith to cover again what he blushes to unfold. “For,” says he, “Adam begot him by the power of his members, not by diversity of merits.” Now I confess I do not understand what he meant by the latter clause, not by diversity of merits; but when he said, “by the power of his members,” I believe he wished to express what he is ashamed to say openly and clearly. He preferred to use the phrase, “by the power of his members,” rather than say, “by the lust of the flesh.” Plainly—even if the thought did not occur to him—he intimated a something which has an evident application to the subject. For what is more powerful than a man’s members, when they are not in due submission to a man’s will? Even if they be restrained by temperance or continence, their use and control are not in any man’s power. Adam, then, begat his sons by what our author calls “the power of his members,” over which, before he begat them, he blushed, after his sin. If, however, he had never sinned, he would not have begotten them by the power, but in the obedience, of his members. For he would himself have had the power to rule them as subjects to his will, if he, too, by the same will had only submitted himself as a subject to a more powerful One.

## CHAPTER 19 [VIII.]

### THE PELAGIANS MISUNDERSTAND “SEED” IN SCRIPTURE

He goes on to say: “After a while the divine Scripture says again, Adam knew Eve his wife; and she bare a son, and he called his name Seth: saying, The Lord hath raised me up another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.”“ He then adds: “The Divinity is said to have raised up the seed itself; as a proof that the sexual union was His appointment.” This person did not understand what the Scripture records; for he supposed that the reason why it is said, The Lord hath raised me up another seed instead of Abel, was none other than that God might be supposed to have excited in him a desire for sexual intercourse, by means whereof seed might be raised for being poured into the woman’s womb. He was perfectly unaware that what the Scripture has said is not “Has raised me up seed” in the sense he uses, but

only as meaning “Has given me a son.” Indeed, Adam did not use the words in question after his sexual intercourse, when he emitted his seed, but after his wife’s confinement, in which he received his son by the gift of God. For what gratification is there (except perhaps for lascivious persons, and those who, as the apostle says with prohibition, “possess their vessel in the lust of concupiscence” ) in the mere shedding of seed as the ultimate pleasure of sexual union, unless it is followed by the true and proper fruit of marriage—conception and birth?

## CHAPTER 20

### ORIGINAL SIN IS DERIVED FROM THE FAULTY CONDITION OF HUMAN SEED

This, however, I would not say, as implying at all that we must look for some other creator than the supreme and true God, of either human seed or of man himself who comes from the seed; but as meaning, that the seed would have issued from the human being by the quiet and normal obedience of his members to his will’s command, if sin had not preceded. The question now before us does not concern the nature of human seed, but its corruption. Now the nature has God for its author; it is from its corruption that original sin is derived. If, indeed, the seed had itself no corruption, what means that passage in the Book of Wisdom, “Not being ignorant that they were a naughty generation, and that their malice was inbred, and that their cogitation would never be changed; for their seed was accursed from the beginning”? Now whatever may be the particular application of these words, they are spoken of mankind. How, then, is the malice of every man inbred, and his seed cursed from the beginning, unless it be in respect of the fact, that “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all have sinned”? But where is the man whose “evil cogitation can never be changed,” unless because it cannot be effected by himself, but only by divine grace; without the assistance of which, what are human beings, but that which the Apostle Peter says of them, when he describes them as “natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed”? Accordingly, the Apostle Paul, in a certain passage, having both conditions in view,—even the wrath of God with which we are born, and the grace whereby we are delivered,—says: “Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of

our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by whose grace we are saved.” What, then, is man’s “natural malice,” and “the seed cursed from the beginning;” and what are “the natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed,” and what the “by nature children of wrath”? Was this the condition of the nature which was formed in Adam? God forbid! Inasmuch as his pure nature, however, was corrupted in him, it has run on in this condition by natural descent through all, and still is running; so that there is no deliverance for it from this ruin, except by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### CHAPTER 21 [IX.]

#### IT IS THE GOOD GOD THAT GIVES FRUITFULNESS, AND THE DEVIL THAT CORRUPTS THE FRUIT

What, therefore, is this man’s meaning, in the next passage, wherein he says concerning Noah and his sons, that “they were blessed, even as Adam and Eve were; for God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and have dominion over the earth”“? To these words of the Almighty he added some of his own, saying: “Now that pleasure, which you would have seem diabolical, was resorted to in the case of the above-mentioned married pairs; and it continued to exist, both in the goodness of its institution and in the blessing attached to it. For there can be no doubt that the following words were addressed to Noah and his sons in reference to their bodily connection with their wives, which had become by this time unalterably fixed by use: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.”“ It is unnecessary for us to employ many words in repeating our former argument. The point here in question is the corruption in our nature, whereby its goodness has been depraved, of which corruption the devil is the author. That goodness of nature, as it is in itself, the author of which is God, is not the question we have to consider. Now God has never withdrawn from corrupted and depraved nature His own mercy and goodness, so as to deprive man of fruitfulness, vivacity, and health, as well as the very substance of his mind and body, his senses also and reason, as

well as food, and nourishment, and growth. He, moreover, “maketh His sun to arise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust;” and all that is good in human nature is from the good God, even in the case of those men who will not be delivered from evil.

## CHAPTER 22

### SHALL WE BE ASHAMED OF WHAT WE DO, OR OF WHAT GOD DOES?

It is, however, of pleasure that this man spoke in his passage, because pleasure can be even honourable: of carnal concupiscence, or lust, which produces shame, he made no mention. In some subsequent words, however, he uncovered his susceptibility of shame; and he was unable to dissemble what nature herself has prescribed so forcibly. “There is also,” says he, “that statement: Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.”“ Then after these words of God, he goes on to offer some of his own, saying: “That he might express faith in works, the prophet approached very near to a perilling of modesty.” What a confession! How clear and extorted from him by the force of truth! The prophet, it would seem, to express faith in works, almost imperilled modesty, when he said, “They twain shall become one flesh;” wishing it to be understood of the sexual union of the male and the female. Let the cause be alleged, why the prophet, in expressing the works of God, should approach so near an imperilling of modesty? Is it then the case that the works of man ought not to produce shame, but must be gloried in at all events, and that the works of God must produce shame? Is it, that in setting forth and expressing the works of God the prophet’s love or labour receives no honour, but his modesty is imperilled? What, then, was it possible for God to do, which it would be a shame for His prophet to describe? And, what is a weightier question still, could a man be ashamed of any work which not man, but God, has made in man? whereas workmen in all cases strive, with all the labour and diligence in their power, to avoid shame in the works of their own hands. The truth, however, is, that we are ashamed of that very thing which made those primitive human beings ashamed, when they covered their loins. That is the penalty of sin; that is the plague and mark of sin; that is the temptation and very fuel of sin; that is the law in our members warring against the law of our mind; that is the rebellion against



our own selves, proceeding from our very selves, which by a most righteous retribution is rendered us by our disobedient members. It is this which makes us ashamed, and justly ashamed. If it were not so, what could be more ungrateful, more irreligious in us, if in our members we were to suffer confusion of face, not for our own fault or penalty, but because of the works of God?

#### CHAPTER 23 [X.]

THE PELAGIANS AFFIRM THAT GOD IN THE CASE OF ABRAHAM AND SARAH AROUSED CONCUPISCENCE AS A GIFT FROM HEAVEN

He has much also to say, though to no purpose, concerning Abraham and Sarah, how they received a son according to the promise; and at last he mentions the word concupiscence. But he does not add the usual phrase, “of the flesh,” because this is the very thing which causes the shame. Whereas, on account of concupiscence there is sometimes a call for boasting, inasmuch as there is a concupiscence of the spirit against the flesh, and a concupiscence of wisdom. Accordingly, he says: “Now you have certainly defined as naturally evil this concupiscence which is indispensable for fecundity; whence comes it, therefore, that it is aroused in aged men by the gift of Heaven? Make it clear then, if you can, that that belongs to the devil’s work, which you see is conferred by God as a gift.” He says this, just as if concupiscence of the flesh had been previously wanting in them, and as if God had bestowed it upon them. No doubt it was inherent in this body of death; that fecundity, however, was wanting of which God is the author; and this was actually given whensoever God willed to confer the gift. Be it, however, far from us to affirm, what he thought we meant to say, that Isaac was begotten without the heat of sexual union.

#### CHAPTER 24 [XI.]

WHAT COVENANT OF GOD THE NEW-BORN BABE BREAKS. WHAT WAS THE VALUE OF CIRCUMCISION

But let him inform us how it was that his soul would be cut off from his people if he had not been circumcised on the eighth day. How could he have so sinned, how so offended God, as to be punished for the neglect of others

towards him with so severe a sentence, had there been no original sin in the case? For thus ran the commandment of God concerning the circumcision of infants: "The uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised on the eighth day, his soul shall be cut off from his people; because he hath broken my covenant." Let him tell us, if he can, how that child broke God's covenant,—an innocent babe, so far as he was personally concerned, of eight days' age; and yet there is by no means any falsehood uttered here by God or Holy Scripture. The fact is, the covenant of God which he then broke was not this which commanded circumcision, but that which forbade the tree; when "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all have sinned." And in his case the expiation of this was signified by the circumcision of the eighth day, that is, by the sacrament of the Mediator who was to be incarnate. For it was through this same faith in Christ, who was to come in the flesh, and was to die for us, and on the third day (which coming after the seventh or Sabbath day, was to be the eighth) to rise again, that even holy men were saved of old. For "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." Ever since circumcision was instituted amongst the people of God, which was at that time the sign of the righteousness of faith, it availed also to signify the cleansing even in infants of the original and primitive sin, just as baptism in like manner from the time of its institution began to be of avail for the renewal of man. Not that there was no justification by faith before circumcision; for even when he was still in uncircumcision, Abraham was himself justified by faith, being the father of those nations which should also imitate his faith. In former times, however, the sacramental mystery of justification by faith lay concealed in every mode. Still it was the self-same faith in the Mediator which saved the saints of old, both small and great—not the old covenant, "which gendereth to bondage;" not the law, which was not so given as to be able to give life; but the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. For as we believe that Christ has come in the flesh, so they believed that He was to come; as, again, we believe that He has died, so they believed that He would die; and as we believe that He has risen from the dead, so they believed that He would rise again; whilst both we and they believe alike, that He will hereafter come to judge the quick and the dead. Let not this man, then, throw any hindrance in the way of its salvation upon human

nature, by setting up a bad defence of its merits; because we are all born under sin, and are delivered therefrom by the only One who was born without sin.

#### CHAPTER 25 [XII.]

##### AUGUSTIN NOT THE DEVISER OF ORIGINAL SIN

“This sexual connection of bodies,” he says, “together with the ardour, with the pleasure, with the emission of seed, was made by God, and is praiseworthy on its own account, and is therefore to be approved; it, moreover, became sometimes even a great gift to pious men.” He distinctly and severally repeated the phrases, “with ardour,” “with pleasure,” “with emission of seed.” He did not, however, venture to say, “with lust.” Why is this, if it be not that he is ashamed to name what he does not blush to praise? A gift, indeed, for pious men is the prosperous propagation of children; but not that shame-producing excitement of the members, which our nature would not feel were it in a sound state, although corrupted nature now experiences it. On this account, indeed, it is that he who is born of it requires to be born again, in order that he may be a member of Christ; and that he of whom he is born, even though he be already born again, wants to be freed from that which exists in this body of death by reason of the law of sin. Now since this is the case, how is it he goes on to say, “You must, therefore, of necessity confess that the original sin which you had devised is done away with”? It was not I who devised the original sin, which the catholic faith holds from ancient times; but you, who deny it, are undoubtedly an innovating heretic. In the judgment of God, all are in the devil’s power, born in sin, unless they are regenerated in Christ.

#### CHAPTER 26 [XIII.]

##### THE CHILD IN NO SENSE FORMED BY CONCUPISCENCE

But as he was speaking of Abraham and Sarah, he goes on to say: “If, indeed, you were to affirm that the natural use was strong in them, and there was no offspring, my answer will be: Whom the Creator promised, the Creator also gave; the child which is born is not the work of cohabitation, but of God. He, indeed, who made the first man of the dust, fashions all

men out of seed. As, therefore, the dust of the earth, which was taken as the material, was not the author of man; so likewise that power of sexual pleasure which forms and commingles the seminal elements does not complete the entire process of man's making, but rather presents to God, out of the treasures of nature, material with which He vouchsafes to make the human being." Now the whole of this statement of his, except where he says, that the seminal elements are formed and commingled by sexual pleasure, would be correctly expressed by him were he only earnest in making it to defend the catholic sense. To us, however, who are fully aware what he strives to make out of it, he speaks indeed correctly in a perverse manner. The exceptional statement to the general truth, which I do not deny belongs to this passage, is untrue for this reason, because the pleasure in question of carnal concupiscence does not form the seminal elements. These are already in the body, and are formed by the same true God who created the body itself. They do not receive their existence from the libidinous pleasure, but are excited and emitted in company with it. Whether, indeed, such pleasure accompanies the commingling of the seminal elements of the two sexes in the womb, is a question which perhaps women may be able to determine from their inmost feelings; but it is improper for us to push an idle curiosity so far. That concupiscence, however, which we have to be ashamed of, and the shame of which has given to our secret members their shameful designation, pudenda, had no existence in the body during its life in paradise before the entrance of sin; but it began to exist "in the body of this death" after sin, the rebellion of the members retaliating man's own disobedience. Without this concupiscence it was quite possible to effect the function of the wedded pair in the procreation of children: just as many a laborious work is accomplished by the compliant operation of our other limbs, without any lascivious heat; for they are simply moved by the direction of the will, not excited by the ardour of concupiscence.

## CHAPTER 27

THE PELAGIANS ARGUE THAT GOD SOMETIMES CLOSES THE WOMB IN ANGER, AND OPENS IT WHEN APPEASED

Carefully consider the rest of his remarks: “This likewise,” says he, “is confirmed by the apostle’s authority. For when the blessed Paul spoke of the resurrection of the dead, he said, “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened.” And afterwards, But God giveth it a body as it pleaseth Him, and to every seed its own body.’ If, therefore, God,” says he, “has assigned to human seed, as to every thing else, its own proper body, which no wise or pious man will deny, how will you prove that any person is born guilty? Do, I beg of you, reflect with what a noose this assertion of natural sin is choked. But come,” he says, “deal more gently with yourself, I pray you. Believe me, God made even you: it must, however, be confessed, that a serious error has infected you. For what profaner opinion can be broached than that either God did not make man, or else that He made him for the devil; or, at any rate, that the devil framed God’s image, that is, man,—which clearly is a statement not more absurd than impious? Is then,” says he, “God so poor in resources, so lacking in all sense of propriety, as not to have had aught which He could confer on holy men as their reward, except what the devil, after making them his dupes, might infuse into them for their vitiation? Would you like to know, however, that even in the case of those who are no saints, God can be proved to have bestowed this power of procreation of children? When Abraham, struck with fear among a foreign nation, said that Sarah, his wife, was his sister, it is said that Abimelech, the king of the country, abducted her for a night’s enjoyment of her. But God, who had the holy woman’s honour in His keeping, appeared to Abimelech in his sleep, and restrained the royal audacity; threatening him with death if he went to the length of violating the wife. Then Abimelech said: Wilt thou, O Lord, slay an innocent and righteous nation? Did they not tell me that they were brother and sister? Therefore Abimelech arose early in the morning, and took a thousand pieces of silver, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and women-servants, and gave them to Abraham, and sent away his wife untouched. But Abraham prayed unto God for Abimelech; and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-servants.”“ Now why he narrated all this at so great a length, you may find in these few words which he added: “God,” he says, “at the prayer of Abraham, restored their potency of generation, which had been taken away from the wombs of even the meanest servants; because God had closed up every womb in the house of Abimelech. Consider now,” says he, “whether that ought to be

called a natural evil which sometimes God when angry takes away, and when appeased restores. He,” says he, “makes the children both of the pious and of the ungodly, inasmuch as the circumstance of their being parents appertains to that nature which rejoices in God as its Author, whilst the fact of their impiety belongs to the depravity of their desires, and this comes to every person whatever as the consequence of free will.”

#### CHAPTER 28 [XIV.]

##### AUGUSTIN’S ANSWER TO THIS ARGUMENT. ITS DEALING WITH SCRIPTURE

Now to this lengthy statement of his we have to say in answer, that, in the passages which he has quoted from the sacred writings, there is nothing said about that shameful lust, which we say did not exist in the body of our first parents in their blessedness, when they were naked and were not ashamed. The first passage from the apostle was spoken of the seeds of corn, which first die in order to be quickened. For some reason or other, he was unwilling to complete the verse for his quotation. All he adduces from it is: “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened;” but the apostle adds, “except it die.” This writer, however, so far as I can judge, wished this passage, which treats only of corn seeds, to be understood of human seed, by such as read it without either understanding the Holy Scriptures or recollecting them. Indeed, he not merely curtailed this particular sentence, by omitting the clause, “except it die,” but he omitted the following words, in which the apostle explained of what seeds he was speaking; for the apostle adds: “And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but the bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain.” This he omitted, and closed up his context with what the apostle then writes: “But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed its own body;” just as if the apostle spoke of man in cohabitation when he said, “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened,” with a view to our understanding of human seed, that it is quickened by God, not by man in cohabitation begetting children. For he had previously said: “Sexual pleasure does not complete the entire process of man’s making, but rather presents to God, out of the treasures of nature, material with which He vouchsafes to make the human being.” He then added the quotation, as if the apostle affirmed as follows: Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not

quickened,—quickened, that is, by thyself; but God forms the human being out of thy seed. As if the apostle had not said the intermediate words, which this writer chose to pass over; and as if the apostle’s aim was to speak of human seed thus: “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened; but God giveth to the seed a body such as pleaseth Him, and to every seed its own body.” Indeed, after the apostle’s words, he introduces remarks of his own to this effect: “If, therefore, God has assigned to human seed, as to everything else, its own proper body, which no wise or pious man will deny;” quite as if the apostle in the passage in question spoke of human seed.

## CHAPTER 29

THE SAME CONTINUED. AUGUSTIN ALSO ASSERTS THAT GOD FORMS MAN AT BIRTH

Though I have given special attention to the point, I have failed to discover what assistance he could obtain from this deceitful use of Scripture, except that he wanted to produce the apostle as a witness, and by him to prove, what we also assert, that God forms man of human seed. And inasmuch as no passage directly occurred to him, he deceitfully manipulated this particular one; fearing no doubt that, if the apostle should chance to seem to have spoken of corn seeds, and not of human, in this passage, we should have suggested to us at once by such procedure of his, how to refute him: not indeed as the pure-minded advocate of a chastened will, but as the impudent proclaimer of a profligate voluptuousness. But from the very seeds, forsooth, which the farmers sow in their fields he can be refuted. For why can we not suppose that God could have granted to man in his happy state in paradise, the same course with regard to his own seed which we see granted to the seeds of corn, in such wise that the former might be sown without any shameful lust, the members of generation simply obeying the inclination of the will; just as the latter is sown without any shameful lust, the hands of the husbandman merely moving in obedience to his will? There being, indeed, this difference, that the desire of begetting children in the parent is a nobler one than that which characterizes the farmer, of filling his barns. Then, again, why might not the almighty Creator, with His incontaminable ubiquity, and his power of creating from human seed just what it pleased Him, have operated in women, with respect to what He even

now makes, in the self-same manner as He operates in the ground with corn seeds according to His will, making blessed mothers conceive without lustful passion, and bring forth children without parturient pains, inasmuch as there was not (in that state of happiness, and in the body which was not as yet the body of this death, but rather of that life) in woman when receiving seed anything to produce shame, as there was nothing when giving birth to offspring to cause pain? Whoever refuses to believe this, or is unwilling to have it supposed that, while men previous to any sin lived in that happy state of paradise, such a condition as that which we have sketched could not have been permitted in God's will and kindness, must be regarded as the lover of shameful pleasure, rather than the encomiast of desirable fecundity.

#### CHAPTER 30 [XV.]

##### THE CASE OF ABIMELECH AND HIS HOUSE EXAMINED

Then, again, as to the passage which he has adduced from the inspired history concerning Abimelech, and God's choosing to close up every womb in his household that the women should not bear children, and afterwards opening them that they might become fruitful, what is all this to the point? What has it to do with that shameful concupiscence which is now the question in dispute? Did God, then, deprive those women of this feeling, and give it to them again just when He liked? The punishment however, was that they were unable to bear children, and the blessing that they were able to bear them, after the manner of this corruptible flesh. For God would not confer such a blessing upon this body of death, as only that body of life in paradise could have had before sin entered; that is, the process of conceiving without the prurience of lust, and of bearing children without excruciating pain. But why should we not suppose, since, indeed, Scripture says that every womb was closed, that this took place with something of pain, so that the women were unable to bear cohabitation, and that God inflicted this pain in His wrath, and removed it in His mercy? For if lust was to be taken away as an impediment to begetting offspring, it ought to have been taken away from the men, not from the women. For a woman might perform her share in cohabitation by her will, even if the lust ceased by which she is stimulated, provided it were not absent from the man for



exciting him; unless, perhaps (as Scripture informs us that even Abimelech himself was healed), he would tell us that virile concupiscence was restored to him. If, however, it were true that he had lost this, what necessity was there that he should be warned by God to hold no connection with Abraham's wife? The truth is, Abimelech is said to have been healed, because his household was cured of the affliction which smote it.

#### CHAPTER 31 [XVI.]

##### WHY GOD PROCEEDS TO CREATE HUMAN BEINGS, WHO HE KNOWS WILL BE BORN IN SIN

Let us now look at those three clauses of his, than which three, he says, nothing more profane could possibly be uttered: "Either God did not make man, or else He made him for the devil; or, at any rate, the devil framed God's image, that is, man." Now, the first and the last of these sentences, even he himself must allow, if he be not reckless and perverse, were never uttered by us. The dispute is confined to that which he puts second between the other two. In respect of this, he is so far mistaken as to suppose that we had said that God made man for the devil; as if, in the case of human beings whom God creates of human parents, His care and purpose and provision were, that by means of His workmanship the devil should have as slaves those whom he is unable to make for himself. God forbid that any sort of pious belief, however childish, should ever entertain such a sentiment as this! Of His own goodness God has made man—the first without sin, all others under sin—for the purposes of His own profound thoughts. For just as He knew full well what to do with reference to the malice of the devil himself, and what He does is just and good, however unjust and evil he is, about whom He takes His measures; and just as He was not unwilling to create him because He foresaw that he would be evil; so in regard to the entire human race, though not a man of it is born without the taint of sin, He who is supremely good Himself is always working out good, making some men, as it were, "vessels of mercy," whom grace distinguishes from those who are "vessels of wrath;" whilst He makes others, as it were, "vessels of wrath," that He may make known the riches of His glory towards the vessels of mercy. Let, then, this objector go and contest the point against the apostle, whose words I use; nay, against the very Potter, whom the apostle

forbids us answering again, in the well-known words: “Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God! Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?” Well now, will this man contend that the vessels of wrath are not under the dominion of the devil? or else, because they are under this dominion, are they made by another creator than He who makes the vessels of mercy? Or does He make them of other material, and not out of the self-same lump? Here, then, he may object, and say: “Therefore God makes these vessels for the devil.” As if God knew not how to make such a use of even these for the furtherance of His own good and righteous works, as He makes of the very devil himself.

#### CHAPTER 32 [XVII.]

##### GOD NOT THE AUTHOR OF THE EVIL IN THOSE WHOM HE CREATES

Then, does God feed the children of perdition, the goats on His left hand, for the devil and nourish and clothe them for the devil “because He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust”? He creates, then, the evil just in the same way as He feeds and nourishes the evil; because what He bestows on them by creating them appertains to the goodness of nature; and the growth which He gives them by food and nourishment, He bestows on them, of course, as a kindly help, not to their evil character, but to that same good nature which He in His goodness created. For in as far as they are human beings—this is a good of that nature whose author and maker is God; but in as far as they are born with sin and so destined to perdition unless they are born again, they belong to the seed which was cursed from the beginning, by the fault of the primitive disobedience. This fault, however, is turned to good account by the Maker of even the vessels of wrath, that He may make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy: and that no one may attribute to any merits of his own, pertaining as he does to the self-same mass, his deliverance through grace; but “he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

## CHAPTER 33 [XVIII.]

### THOUGH GOD MAKES US, WE PERISH UNLESS HE RE-MAKES US IN CHRIST

From this most true and firmly-established principle of the apostolic and catholic faith the writer before us departs in company with the Pelagians. He will not have it that men are born under the dominion of the devil, lest infants be carried to Christ to be delivered from the power of darkness, and to be translated into His kingdom. Thus he becomes the accuser of the Church which is spread over the world; into this Church everywhere infants, when to be baptized, are first exorcised, for no other reason than that the prince of this world may be cast out of them. For by him must they be necessarily possessed, as vessels of wrath, since they are born of Adam, unless they be born again in Christ, and transferred through grace as vessels of mercy into His kingdom. In his attack, however, upon this most firmly-established truth, he would avoid the appearance of an assault upon the entire Church of Christ. Accordingly, he limits his appeal to me alone, and in the tone of reproof and admonition he says: “But God made even you, though it must be confessed that a serious error has infected you.” Well now, I thankfully acknowledge that God did make even me; and still I must have perished with the vessels of wrath, if He had only made me of Adam, and had not re-made me in Christ. Possessed, however, as this man is with the heresy of Pelagius, he does not believe this: if, indeed, he persists in so great an error to the very end, then not he, but catholics, will be able to see the character and extent of the error which has not simply infected, but absolutely destroyed him.

## CHAPTER 34 [XIX.]

### THE PELAGIANS ARGUE THAT COHABITATION RIGHTLY USED IS A GOOD, AND WHAT IS BORN FROM IT IS GOOD

I request your attention now to the following words. He says, “That children, however, who are conceived in wedlock are by nature good, we may learn from the apostle’s words, when he speaks of men who, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust, men with men working together that which is disgraceful. Here,” says he, “the apostle shows the use of the woman to be both natural and, in its way, laudable; the abuse

consisting in the exercise of one's own will in opposition to the decent use of the institution. Deservedly then," says he, "in those who make a right use thereof, concupiscence is commended in its kind and mode; whilst the excess of it, in which abandoned persons indulge, is punished. Indeed, at the very time when God punished the abuse in Sodom with His judgment of fire, He invigorated the generative powers of Abraham and Sarah, which had become impotent through old age. If, therefore," he goes on to say, "you think that fault must be found with the strength of the generative organs, because the Sodomites were steeped in sin thereby, you will have also to censure such created things as bread and wine, since Holy Scripture informs us that they sinned also in the abuse of these gifts. For the Lord, by the mouth of His prophet Ezekiel, says: These, moreover, were the sins of thy sister Sodom; in their pride, she and her children overflowed in fulness of bread and abundance of wine; and they helped not the hand of the poor and needy.' Choose, therefore," says he, "which alternative you would rather have: either impute to the work of God the sexual connection of human bodies, or account such created things as bread and wine to be equally evil. But if you should prefer this latter conclusion, you prove yourself to be a Manichean. The truth, however, is this: he who observes moderation in natural concupiscence uses a good thing well; but he who does not observe moderation, abuses a good thing. What means your statement, then," he asks, "when you say that the good of marriage is no more impeachable on account of the original sin which is derived herefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication can be excused because of the natural good which is born of them"? In these words," says he, "you conceded what you had denied, and what you had conceded you nullified; and you aim at nothing so much as to be unintelligible. Show me any bodily marriage without sexual connection. Else impose some one name on this operation, and designate the conjugal union as either a good or an evil. You answer, no doubt, that you have already defined marriages to be good. Well then, if marriage is good,—if the human being is the good fruit of marriage; if this fruit, being God's work, cannot be evil, born as it is by good agency out of good,—where is the original evil which has been set aside by so many prior admissions?"

## CHAPTER 35 [XX.]

HE ANSWERS THE ARGUMENTS OF JULIANUS. WHAT IS THE NATURAL USE OF THE WOMAN? WHAT IS THE UNNATURAL USE?

My answer to this challenge is, that not only the children of wedlock, but also those of adultery, are a good work in so far as they are the work of God, by whom they are created: but as concerns original sin, they are all born under condemnation of the first Adam; not only those who are born in adultery, but likewise such as are born in wedlock, unless they be regenerated in the second Adam, which is Christ. As to what the apostle says of the wicked, that “leaving the natural use of the woman, the men burned in their lust one toward another: men with men working that which is unseemly;” he did not speak of the conjugal use, but the “natural use,” wishing us to understand how it comes to pass that by means of the members created for the purpose the two sexes can combine for generation. Thus it follows, that even when a man unites with a harlot to use these members, the use is a natural one. It is not, however, commendable, but rather culpable. But as regards any part of the body which is not meant for generative purposes, should a man use even his own wife in it, it is against nature and flagitious. Indeed, the same apostle had previously said concerning women: “Even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature;” and then concerning men he added, that they worked that which is unseemly by leaving the natural use of the woman. Therefore, by the phrase in question, “the natural use,” it is not meant to praise conjugal connection; but thereby are denoted those flagitious deeds which are more unclean and criminal than even men’s use of women, which, even if unlawful, is nevertheless natural.

## CHAPTER 36 [XXI.]

GOD MADE NATURE GOOD: THE SAVIOUR RESTORES IT WHEN CORRUPTED

Now we do not reprehend bread and wine because some men are luxurious and drunkards, any more than we disapprove of gold because of the greedy and avaricious. Wherefore on the same principle we do not censure the honourable connection between husband and wife, because of the shame-causing lust of bodies. For the former would have been quite possible

before any antecedent commission of sin, and by it the united pair would not have been made to blush; whereas the latter arose after the perpetration of sin, and they were obliged to hide it, from very shame. Accordingly, in all united pairs ever since, however well and lawfully they have used this evil, there has been a permanent necessity of avoiding the sight of man in any work of this kind, and thus acknowledging what caused inevitable shame, though a good thing would certainly cause no man to be ashamed. In this way we have two distinct facts insensibly introduced to our notice: the good of that laudable union of the sexes for the purpose of generating children; and the evil of that shameful lust, in consequence of which the offspring must be regenerated in order to escape condemnation. The man, therefore, who, though with the lust which causes shame, joins in lawful cohabitation, turns an evil to good account; whereas he who joins in an unlawful cohabitation uses an evil badly; for that is more correctly called evil than good, at which both bad and good alike blush. We do better to believe him who has said, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing," rather than him who calls that good, by which he is so conformed that he admits it to be evil; but if he feels no shame, he adds the worse evil of impudence. Rightly then did we declare that "the good of marriage is no more impeachable because of the original sin which is derived therefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication can be excused, because of the natural good which is born of them:" since the human nature which is born, whether of wedlock or of adultery, is the work of God. Now if this nature were an evil, it ought not to have been born; if it had not evil, it would not have to be regenerated: and (that I may combine the two cases in one and the same predicate) if human nature were an evil thing, it would not have to be saved; if it had not in it any evil, it would not have to be saved. He, therefore, who contends that nature is not good, says that the Maker of the creature is not good; whilst he who will have it, that nature has no evil in it, deprives it in its corrupted condition of a merciful Saviour. From this, then, it follows, that in the birth of human beings neither fornication is to be excused on account of the good which is formed out of it by the good Creator, nor is marriage to be impeached by reason of the evil which has to be healed in it by the merciful Saviour.

## CHAPTER 37 [XXII.]

IF THERE IS NO MARRIAGE WITHOUT COHABITATION, SO THERE IS NO COHABITATION WITHOUT SHAME

“Show me,” he says, “any bodily marriage without sexual connection.” I do not show him any bodily marriage without sexual connection; but then, neither does he show me any case of sexual connection which is without shame. In paradise, however, if sin had not preceded, there would not have been, indeed, generation without union of the sexes, but this union would certainly have been without shame; for in the sexual union there would have been a quiet acquiescence of the members, not a lust of the flesh productive of shame. Matrimony, therefore, is a good, in which the human being is born after orderly conception; the fruit, too, of matrimony is good, as being the very human being which is thus born; sin, however, is an evil with which every man is born. Now it was God who made and still makes man; but “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned.”

## CHAPTER 38 [XXIII.]

JOVINIAN USED FORMERLY TO CALL CATHOLICS MANICHEANS; THE ARIANS ALSO USED TO CALL CATHOLICS SABELLIANS

“By your new mode of controversy,” says he, “you both profess to be a catholic and patronize Manichaeus, inasmuch as you designate matrimony both as a great good and a great evil.” Now he is utterly ignorant of what he says, or pretends to be ignorant. Or else he does not understand what we say, or does not wish it to be understood. But if he does not understand, he is impeded by the pre-occupation of error; or if he does not wish our meaning to be understood, then obstinacy is the fault with which he defends his error. Jovinian, too, who endeavoured a few years ago to found a new heresy, used to declare that the catholics patronized the Manicheans, because in opposition to him they preferred holy virginity to marriage. But this man is sure to reply, that he does not agree with Jovinian in his indifference about marriage and virginity. I do not myself say that this is their opinion; still these new heretics must allow, by the fact of Jovinian’s playing off the Manicheans upon the catholics, that the expedient is not a

novel one. We then declare that marriage is a good, not an evil. But just as the Arians charge us with being Sabellians, although we do not say that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one and the same, as the Sabellians hold; but affirm that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost have one and the same nature, as the catholics believe: so do the Pelagians cast the Manicheans in our teeth, although we do not declare marriage to be an evil, as the Manicheans pretend, but affirm that evil accrued to the first man and woman, that is to say, to the first married pair, and from them passed on to all men, as the catholics hold. As, however, the Arians, while avoiding the Sabellians, fall into worse company, because they have had the audacity to divide not the Persons of the Trinity, but the natures; so the Pelagians, in their efforts to escape from the pestilent error of the Manicheans, by taking the opposite extreme, are convicted of entertaining worse sentiments than the Manicheans themselves touching the fruit of matrimony, inasmuch as they believe that infants stand in no need of Christ as their Physician.

#### CHAPTER 39 [XXIV.]

##### MAN BORN OF WHATEVER PARENTAGE IS SINFUL AND CAPABLE OF REDEMPTION

He then says: “You conclude that a human being, if born of fornication, is not guilty; and if born in wedlock, is not innocent. Your assertion, therefore, amounts to this, that natural good may possibly subsist from adulterous connections, while original sin is actually derived from marriage.” Well now, he here attempts, but in vain before an intelligent reader, to give a wrong turn to words which are correct enough. Far be it from us to say, that a human being, if born in fornication, is not guilty. But we do affirm, that a human being, whether he be born in wedlock or in fornication, is in some respect good, because of the Author of nature, God; we add, however, that he derives some evil by reason of original sin. Our statement, therefore, “that natural good can subsist even from adulterous parentage, but that original sin is derived even from marriage,” does not amount to what he endeavours to make of it, that one born in adultery is not guilty, nor innocent when born in wedlock; but that one who is generated in either condition is guilty, because of original sin; and that the offspring of either state may be freed by regeneration, because of the good of nature.



## CHAPTER 40 [XXV.]

### AUGUSTIN DECLINES THE DILEMMA OFFERED HIM

“One of these propositions,” says he, “is true, the other false.” My reply is as brief as the allegation: Both are really true, neither is false. “It is true,” he goes on to say, “that the sin of adultery cannot be excused by reason of the man who is born of it; inasmuch as the sin which adulterers commit, pertains to corruption of the will; but the offspring which they produce tends to the praise of fecundity. If one were to sow wheat which had been stolen, the crop which springs up is none the worse. Of course,” says he, “I blame the thief, but I praise the corn. So I pronounce him innocent who is born of the generous fruitfulness of the seed; even as the apostle puts it: God giveth it a body, as it pleases Him; and to every seed its own body;’ but, at the same time, I condemn the flagitious man who has committed his adulterous sin in his perverse use of the divine appointment.”

## CHAPTER 41 [XXVI.]

### THE PELAGIANS ARGUE THAT ORIGINAL SIN CANNOT COME THROUGH MARRIAGE IF MARRIAGE IS GOOD

After this he proceeds with the following words: “Certainly if evil is contracted from marriage, it may be blamed, nay, cannot be excused; and you place under the devil’s power its work and fruit, because everything which is the cause of evil is itself without good. The human being, however, who is born of wedlock owes his origin not to the reproaches of wedlock, but to its seminal elements: the cause of these, however, lies in the condition of bodies; and whosoever makes a bad use of these bodies, deals a blow at the good desert thereof, not at their nature. It is therefore clear,” argues he, “that the good is not the cause of the evil. If, therefore,” he continues, “original evil is derived even from marriage, the cause of the evil is the compact of marriage; and that must needs be evil by which and from which the evil fruit has made its appearance; even as the Lord says in the Gospel: A tree is known by its fruits.’ How then,” he asks, “do you think yourself worthy of attention, when you say that marriage is good, and yet declare that nothing but evil proceeds from it? It is evident, then, that marriages are guilty, since original sin is deduced from them; and they are

indefensible, too, unless their fruit be proved innocent. But they are defended, and pronounced good; therefore their fruit is proved to be innocent.”

## CHAPTER 42

THE PELAGIANS TRY TO GET RID OF ORIGINAL SIN BY THEIR PRAISE OF GOD’S WORKS; MARRIAGE, IN ITS NATURE AND BY ITS INSTITUTION, IS NOT THE CAUSE OF SIN

I have an answer ready for all this; but before I give it, I wish the reader carefully to notice, that the result of the opinions of these persons is, that no Saviour is necessary for infants, whom they deem to be entirely without any sins to be saved from. This vast perversion of the truth, so hostile to God’s great grace, which is given through our Lord Jesus Christ, who “came to seek and to save what was lost,” tries to insinuate its way into the hearts of the unintelligent by eulogizing the works of God; that is, by its eulogy of human nature, of human seed, of marriage, of sexual intercourse, of the fruits of matrimony—which are all of them good things. I will not say that he adds the praise of lust; because he too is ashamed even to name it, so that it is something else, and not it, which he seems to praise. By this method of his, not distinguishing between the evils which have accrued to nature and the goodness of nature’s very self, he does not, indeed, show it to be sound (because that is untrue), but he does not permit its diseased condition to be healed. And, therefore, that first proposition of ours, to the effect that the good thing, even the human being, which is born of adultery, does not excuse the sin of adulterous connection, he allows to be true; and this point, which occasions no question to arise between us, he even defends and strengthens (as he well may) by his similitude of the thief who sows the seed which he stole, and out of which there arises a really good harvest. Our other proposition, however, that “the good of marriage cannot be blamed for the original sin which is derived from it,” he will not admit to be true; if, indeed, he assented to it, he would not be a Pelagian heretic, but a catholic Christian. “Certainly,” says he, “if evil arises from marriage, it may be blamed, nay, cannot be excused; and you place its work and fruit under the devil’s power, because everything which is the cause of evil is itself without good.” And in addition to this, he contrived other arguments to show that

good could not possibly be the cause of evil; and from this he drew the inference, that marriage, which is a good, is not the cause of evil; and that consequently from it no man could be born in a sinful state, and having need of a Saviour: just as if we said that marriage is the cause of sin, though it is true that the human being which is born in wedlock is not born without sin. Marriage was instituted not for the purpose of sinning, but of producing children. Accordingly the Lord's blessing on the married state ran thus: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." The sin, however, which is derived to children from marriage does not belong to marriage, but to the evil which accrues to the human agents, from whose union marriage comes into being. The truth is, both the evil of shameful lust can exist without marriage, and marriage might have been without it. It appertains, however, to the condition of the body (not of that life, but) of this death, that marriage cannot exist without it though it may exist without marriage. Of course that lust of the flesh which causes shame has existence out of the married state, whenever it urges men to the commission of adultery, chambering and uncleanness, so utterly hostile to the purity of marriage; or again, when it does not commit any of these things, because the human agent gives no permission or assent to their commission, but still rises and is set in motion and creates disturbance, and (especially in dreams) effects the likeness of its own veritable work, and reaches the end of its own emotion. Well, now, this is an evil which is not even in the married state actually an evil of marriage; but it has this apparatus all ready in the body of this death, even against its own will, which is indispensable no doubt for the accomplishment of that which it does will. The evil in question, therefore, does not accrue to marriage from its own institution, which was blessed; but entirely from the circumstance that sin entered into the world by one man, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned.

#### CHAPTER 43

THE GOOD TREE IN THE GOSPEL THAT CANNOT BRING FORTH EVIL FRUIT, DOES NOT MEAN MARRIAGE

What, then, does he mean by saying, "A tree is known by its fruits," on the ground of our reading that the Lord spake thus in the Gospel? Was, then, the Lord speaking of this question in these words, and not rather of men's two

wills, the good and the evil, calling one of these the good tree, and the other the corrupt tree, inasmuch as good works spring out of a good will, and evil ones out of an evil will—the converse being impossible, good works out of an evil will, and evil ones out of a good will? If, however, we were to suppose marriage to be the good tree, according to the Gospel simile which he has mentioned, then, of course, we must on the other hand assume fornication to be the corrupt tree. Wherefore, if a human being is said to be the fruit of marriage, in the sense of the good fruit of a good tree, then undoubtedly a human being could never have been born in fornication. “For a corrupt tree bringeth not forth good fruit.” Once more, if he were to say that not adultery must be supposed to occupy the place of the tree, but rather human nature, of which man is born, then in this way not even marriage can stand for the tree, but only the human nature of which man is born. His simile, therefore, taken from the Gospel avails him nothing in elucidating this question, because marriage is not the cause of the sin which is transmitted in the natural birth, and atoned for in the new birth; but the voluntary transgression of the first man is the cause of original sin. “You repeat,” says he, “your allegation, Just as sin, from whatever source it is derived to infants, is the work of the devil, so man, howsoever he be born, is the work of God.”“ Yes, I said this, and most truly too; and if this man were not a Pelagian, but a catholic, he too would have nothing else to avow in the catholic faith.

#### CHAPTER 44 [XXVII.]

##### THE PELAGIANS ARGUE THAT IF SIN COMES BY BIRTH, ALL MARRIED PEOPLE DESERVE CONDEMNATION

What, then, is his object when he inquires of us, “By what means sin may be found in an infant, through the will, or through marriage, or through its parents”? He speaks, indeed, in such a way as if he had an answer to all these questions, and as if by clearing all of sin together he would have nothing remain in the infant whence sin could be found. I beg your attention to his very words: “Through what,” says he, “is sin found in an infant? Through the will? But there has never been one in him? Through marriage? But this appertains to the parents’ work, of whom you had previously declared that in this action they had not sinned; though it appears from your

subsequent words that you did not make this concession truly. Marriage, therefore,” he says, “must be condemned, since it furnished the cause of the evil. Yet marriage only indicates the work of personal agents. The parents, therefore, who by their coming together afforded occasion for the sin, are properly deserving of the condemnation. It does not then admit of doubt,” says he, “any longer, if we are to follow your opinion, that married persons are handed over to eternal punishment, it being by their means brought about that the devil has come to exercise dominion over men. And what becomes of what you just before had said, that man was the work of God? Because if through their birth it happens that evil is in men, and through the evil that the devil has power over men, so in fact you declare the devil to be the author of men, from whom comes their origin at birth. If, however, you believe that man is made by God, and that husband and wife are innocent, see how impossible is your standpoint, that original sin is derived from them.”

#### CHAPTER 45

##### ANSWER TO THIS ARGUMENT: THE APOSTLE SAYS WE ALL SINNED IN ONE

Now, there is an answer for him to all these questions given by the apostle, who censures neither the infant's will, which is not yet matured in him for sinning, nor marriage, which, as such, has not only its institution, but its blessing also, from God; nor parents, so far as they are parents, who are united together properly and lawfully for the procreation of children; but he says, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for in him all have sinned.” Now, if these persons would only receive this statement with catholic hearts and ears, they would not have rebellious feelings against the grace and faith of Christ, nor would they vainly endeavour to convert to their own particular and heretical sense these very clear and manifest words of the apostle, when they assert that the purport of the passage is to this effect: that Adam was the first to sin, and that any one who wished afterwards to commit sin found an example for sinning in him; so that sin, you must know, did not pass from this one upon all men by birth, but by the imitation of this one. Whereas it is certain that if the apostle meant this imitation to be here understood, he would have said that sin had entered into the world and passed upon all men, not by one

man, but rather by the devil. For of the devil it is written: "They that are on his side do imitate him." He used the phrase "by one man," from whom the generation of men, of course, had its beginning, in order to show us that original sin had passed upon all men by generation.

## CHAPTER 46

### THE REIGN OF DEATH, WHAT IT IS; THE FIGURE OF THE FUTURE ADAM; HOW ALL MEN ARE JUSTIFIED THROUGH CHRIST

But what else is meant even by the apostle's subsequent words? For after he had said the above, he added, "For until the law sin was in the world," as much as to say that not even the law was able to take away sin. "But sin," adds he, "was not imputed when there was no law." It existed then, but was not imputed, for it was not set forth so that it might be imputed. It is on the same principle, indeed, that he says in another passage: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "Nevertheless," says he, "death reigned from Adam to Moses;" that is, as he had already expressed it, "until the law." Not that there was no sin after Moses, but because even the law, which was given by Moses, was unable to deprive death of its power, which, of course, reigns only by sin. Its reign, too, is such as to plunge mortal man even into that second death which is to endure for evermore. "Death reigned," but over whom? "Even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come." Of whom that was to come, if not Christ? And in what sort a figure, except in the way of contrariety? which he elsewhere briefly expresses: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The one condition was in one, even as the other condition was in the other; this is the figure. But this figure is not conformable in every respect; accordingly the apostle, following up the same idea, added, "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." But why "hath it much more abounded," except it be that all who are delivered through Christ suffer temporal death on Adam's account, but have everlasting life in store for the sake of Christ Himself? "And not as it was by one that sinned," says he, "so is the gift: for the judgment was from one to condemnation, but the free gift is from many

offences unto justification.” “By one” what, but offence? since it is added, “the free gift is from many offences.” Let these objectors tell us how it can be “by one offence unto condemnation,” unless it be that even the one original sin which has passed over unto all men is sufficient for condemnation? Whereas the free gift delivers from many offences to justification, because it not only cancels the one offence, which is derived from the primal sin, but all others also which are added in every individual man by the motion of his own will. “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, by the offence of one upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one upon all men unto justification of life.” Let them after this persist in their vain imaginations, and maintain that one man did not hand on sin by propagation, but only set the example of committing it. How is it, then, that by one’s offence judgment comes on all men to condemnation, and not rather by each man’s own numerous sins, unless it be that even if there were but that one sin, it is sufficient, without the addition of any more, to lead to condemnation,—as, indeed, it does lead all who die in infancy who are born of Adam, without being born again in Christ? Why, then, does he, when he refuses to hear the apostle, ask us for an answer to his question, “By what means may sin be discovered in an infant,—through the will, or through marriage, or through its parents?” Let him listen in silence, and hear by what means sin may be discovered in an infant. “By the offence of one,” says the apostle, “upon all men to condemnation.” He said, moreover, all to condemnation through Adam, and all to justification through Christ: not, of course, that Christ removes to life all those who die in Adam; but he said “all” and “all,” because, as without Adam no one goes to death, so without Christ no man to life. Just as we say of a teacher of letters, when he is alone in a town: This man teaches all their learning; not because all the inhabitants take lessons, but because no man who learns at all is taught by any but him. Indeed, the apostle afterwards designates as many those whom he had previously described as all, meaning the self-same persons by the two different terms. “For,” says he, “as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

## CHAPTER 47

### THE SCRIPTURES REPEATEDLY TEACH US THAT ALL SIN IN ONE

Still let him ply his question: “By what means may sin be discovered in an infant?” He may find an answer in the inspired pages: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned.” “Through the offence of one many are dead.” “The judgment was from one to condemnation.” “By one man’s offence death reigned by one.” “By the offence of one, Judgment came upon all men to condemnation.” “By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” Behold, then, “by what means sins may be discovered in an infant.” Let him now believe in original sin; let him permit infants to come to Christ, that they may be saved. [XXVIII.] What means this passage of his: “He sins not who is born; he sins not who begat him; He sins not who created him. Amidst these intrenchments of innocence, therefore, what are the breaches through which you pretend that sin entered?” Why does he search for a hidden chink when he has an open door? “By one man,” says the apostle; “through the offence of one,” says the apostle; “By one man’s disobedience,” says the apostle. What does he want more? What does he require plainer? What does he expect to be more impressively repeated?

## CHAPTER 48

### ORIGINAL SIN AROSE FROM ADAM’S DEPRAVED WILL. WHENCE THE CORRUPT WILL SPRANG

“If,” says he, “sin comes from the will, it is an evil will that causes sin; if it comes from nature, then nature is evil.” I at once answer, Sin does come from the will. Perhaps he wants to know, whether original sin also? I answer, most certainly original sin also. Because it, too, was engendered from the will of the first man; so that it both existed in him, and passed on to all. As for what he next proposes, “If it comes from nature, then nature is evil,” I request him to answer, if he can, to this effect: As it is manifest that all evil works spring from a corrupt will, like the fruits of a corrupt tree; so let him say whence arose the corrupt will itself—the corrupt tree which yields the corrupt fruits. If from an angel, what was the angel, but the good work of God? If from man, what was even he, but the good work of God?



Nay, inasmuch as the corrupt will arose in the angel from an angel, and in man from man, what were both these, previous to the evil arising within them, but the good work of God, with a good and laudable nature? Behold, then, evil arises out of good; nor was there any other source, indeed, whence it could arise, but out of good. I call that will bad which no evil has preceded; no evil works, of course, since they only proceed from an evil will, as from a corrupt tree. Nevertheless, that the evil will arose out of good, could not be, because that good was made by the good God, but because it was created out of nothing—not out of God. What, therefore, becomes of his argument, “If nature is the work of God, it will never do for the work of the devil to permeate the work of God”? Did not the work of the devil, I ask, arise in a work of God, when it first arose in that angel who became the devil? Well, then, if evil, which was absolutely nowhere previously, could arise in a work of God, why could not evil, which had by this time found an existence somewhere, pervade the work of God; especially when the apostle uses the very expression in the passage, “And so death passed upon all men”? Can it be that men are not the work of God? Sin, therefore, has passed upon all men—in other words, the devil’s work has penetrated the work of God; or putting the same meaning in another shape, The work done by a work of God has pervaded God’s work. And this is the reason why God alone has an unchangeable and almighty goodness: even before any evil came into existence He made all things good; and out of all the evils which have arisen in the good things which He has made, He works through all for good.

#### CHAPTER 49 [XXIX.]

##### IN INFANTS NATURE IS OF GOD, AND THE CORRUPTION OF NATURE OF THE DEVIL

“In a single man rightly is the intention blamed and the origin praised; because there must be two things to admit of contraries: in an infant, however, there is but one thing, nature only; because will has no existence in his case. Now this one thing,” says he, “is ascribable either to God or to the devil. If nature,” he goes on to observe, “is of God, there cannot be original evil in it. If of the devil, there will be nothing on the ground of which man may be vindicated for the work of God. So that he is completely a Manichean who maintains original sin.” Let him hear rather what is true

in opposition to all this. In a single man the will is to be blamed, and his nature to be praised; because there should be two things for the application of contraries. Still, even in an infant, it is not the case that there is but one thing only, that is, the nature in which man was created by the good God; for he has also that corruption, which has passed upon all men by one, as the apostle wisely says, and not as the folly of Pelagius, or Coelestius, or any of their disciples would represent the matter. Of these two things, then, which we have said exist in an infant, one is ascribed to God, the other to the devil. From the fact, however, that (owing to one of the two, even the corruption) both are subjected to the power of the devil, there really ensues no incongruity; because this happens not from the power of the devil himself, but of God. In fact, corruption is subjected to corruption, nature to nature, because the two are even in the devil; so that whenever those who are beloved and elect are “delivered from the power of darkness” to which they are justly exposed, it is clear enough how great a gift is bestowed on the justified and good by the good God, who brings good even out of evil.

#### CHAPTER 50

##### THE RISE AND ORIGIN OF EVIL. THE EXORCISM AND EXSUFFLATION OF INFANTS, A PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN RITE

As to the passage, which he seemed to himself to indite in a pious vein, as it were, “If nature is of God, there cannot be original sin in it,” would not another person seem even to him to give a still more pious turn to it, thus: “If nature is of God, there cannot arise any sin in it?” And yet this is not true. The Manicheans, indeed, meant to assert this, and they endeavoured to steep in all sorts of evil the very nature of God itself, and not His creature, made out of nothing. For evil arose in nothing else than what was good—not, however, the supreme and unchangeable good which is God’s nature, but that which was made out of nothing by the wisdom of God. This, then, is the reason why man is claimed for a divine work; for he would not be man unless he were made by the operation of God. But evil would not exist in infants, if evil had not been committed by the wilfulness of the first man, and original sin derived from a nature thus corrupted. It is not true, then, as he puts it, “He is completely a Manichean who maintains original sin;” but rather, he is completely a Pelagian who does not believe in original sin. For

it is not simply from the time when the pestilent opinions of Manichaeus began to grow that in the Church of God infants about to be baptized were for the first time exorcised with exsufflation,—which ceremonial was intended to show that they were not removed into the kingdom of Christ without first being delivered from the power of darkness; nor is it in the books of Manichaeus that we read how “the Son of man come to seek and to save that which was lost,” or how “by one man sin entered into the world,” with those other similar passages which we have quoted above; or how God “visits the sins of the fathers upon the children;” or how it is written in the Psalm, “I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;” or again, how “man was made like unto vanity: his days pass away like a shadow;” or again, “behold, Thou hast made my days old, and my existence as nothing before Thee; nay, every man living is altogether vanity;” or how the apostle says, “every creature was made subject to vanity;” or how it is written in the book of Ecclesiastes, “vanity of vanities; all is vanity: what profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?” and in the book of Ecclesiasticus, “a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam from the day that they go out of their mother’s womb to the day that they return to the mother of all things;” or how again the apostle writes, “in Adam all die;” or how holy Job says, when speaking about his own sins, “for man that is born of a woman is short-lived and full of wrath: as the flower of grass, so does he fall; and he departs like a shadow, nor shall he stay. Hast Thou not taken account even of him, and caused him to enter into judgment in Thy sight? For who shall be pure from uncleanness? Not even one, even if his life should be but of one day upon the earth.” Now when he speaks of uncleanness here, the mere perusal of the passage is enough to show that he meant sin to be understood. It is plain from the words, of what he is speaking. The same phrase and sense occur in the prophet Zechariah, in the place where “the filthy garments” are removed from off the high priest, and it is said to him, “I have taken away thy sins.” Well now, I rather think that all these passages, and others of like import, which point to the fact that man is born in sin and under the curse, are not to be read among the dark recesses of the Manicheans, but in the sunshine of catholic truth.

## CHAPTER 51

TO CALL THOSE THAT TEACH ORIGINAL SIN MANICHEANS IS TO ACCUSE AMBROSE, CYPRIAN, AND THE WHOLE CHURCH

What, moreover, shall I say of those commentators on the divine Scriptures who have flourished in the catholic Church? They have never tried to pervert these testimonies to an alien sense, because they were firmly established in our most ancient and solid faith, and were never moved aside by the novelty of error. Were I to wish to collect these together, and to make use of their testimony, the task would both be too long, and I should probably seem to have bestowed less preference than I ought on canonical authorities, from which one must never deviate. I will merely mention the most blessed Ambrose, to whom (as I have already observed ) Pelagius accorded so signal a testimony of his integrity in the faith. This Ambrose, however, maintained that there was nothing else in infants, which required the healing grace of Christ, than original sin. But in respect of Cyprian, with his all-glorious crown, will any one say of him, that he either was, or ever could by any possibility have been, a Manichean, when he suffered before the pestilent heresy had made its appearance in the Roman world? And yet, in his book on the baptism of infants, he so vigorously maintains original sin as to declare, that even before the eighth day, if necessary, the infant ought to be baptized, lest his soul should be lost; and he wished it to be understood, that the infant could the more readily attain to the indulgence of baptism, inasmuch as it is not so much his own sins, but the sins of another, which are remitted to him. Well, then, let this writer dare to call these Manicheans; let him, moreover, under this scandalous imputation asperse that most ancient tradition of the Church, whereby infants are, as I have said, exorcised with exsufflation, for the purpose of being translated into the kingdom of Christ, after they are delivered from the power of darkness—that is to say, of the devil and his angels. As for ourselves, indeed, we are more ready to be associated with these men, and with the Church of Christ, so firmly rooted in this ancient faith, in suffering any amount of curse and contumely, than with the Pelagians, to be covered with the flattery of public praise.

## CHAPTER 52 [XXX.]

### SIN WAS THE ORIGIN OF ALL SHAMEFUL CONCUPISCENCE

“Do you,” he asks, “repeat your affirmation, There would be no concupiscence if man had not first sinned; marriage, however, would have existed, even if no one had sinned’?” I never said, “There would be no concupiscence,” because there is a concupiscence of the spirit, which craves wisdom. My words were, “There would be no shameful concupiscence.” Let my words be re-perused, even those which he has cited, that it may be clearly seen how dishonestly they are handled by him. However, let him call it by any name he likes. What I said would not have existed unless man had previously sinned, was that which made them ashamed in paradise when they covered their loins, and which every one will allow would not have been felt, had not the sin of disobedience first occurred. Now he who wishes to understand what they felt, ought to consider what it was they covered. For of the fig-leaves they made themselves “aprons,” not clothes; and these aprons or kilts are called perizomata in Greek. Now all know well enough what it is which these peri-zomata cover, which some Latin writers explain by the word *campestris*. Who is ignorant of what persons wore this kilt, and what parts of the body such a dress concealed; even the same which the Roman youths used to cover when they practised naked in the campus, from which circumstance the name *campester* was given to the apron.

## CHAPTER 53 [XXXI.]

### CONCUPISCENCE NEED NOT HAVE BEEN NECESSARY FOR FRUITFULNESS

He says: “Therefore that marriage which might have been without concupiscence, without bodily motion, without necessity for sexual organs—to use your own statement—is pronounced by you to be laudable; whereas such marriages as are now enacted are, according to your decision, the invention of the devil. Those, therefore, whose institution was possible in your dreams, you deliberately assert to be good, while those which Holy Scripture intends, when it says, *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh,*’ you pronounce to be diabolical evils, worthy, in short, to be called a pest, not

matrimony.” It is not to be wondered at, that these Pelagian opponents of mine try to twist my words to any meaning they wish them to bear, when it has been their custom to do the same thing with the Holy Scriptures, and not simply in obscure passages, but where their testimony is clear and plain: a custom, indeed, which is followed by all other heretics. Now who could make such an assertion, as that it was possible for marriages to be “without bodily motion, without necessity for sexual organs”? For God made the sexes; because, as it is written, “He created them male and female.” But how could it possibly happen, that they who were to be united together, and by the very union were to beget children, were not to move their bodies, when, of course, there can be no bodily contact of one person with another if bodily motion be not resorted to? The question before us, then, is not about the motion of bodies, without which there could not be sexual intercourse; but about the shameful motion of the organs of generation, which certainly could be absent, and yet the fructifying connection be still not wanting, if the organs of generation were not obedient to lust, but simply to the will, like the other members of the body. Is it not even now the case, in “the body of this death,” that a command is given to the foot, the arm, the finger, the lip, or the tongue, and they are instantly set in motion at this intimation of our will? And (to take a still more wonderful case) even the liquid contained in the urinary vessels obeys the command to flow from us at our pleasure, and when we are not pressed with its overflow; while the vessels, also, which contain the liquid, discharge without difficulty, if they are in a healthy state, the office assigned them by our will of propelling, pressing out, and ejecting their contents. With how much greater ease and quietness, then, if the generative organs of our body were compliant, would natural motion ensue, and human conception be effected; except in the instance of those persons who violate natural order, and by a righteous retribution are punished with the intractability of these members and organs! This punishment is felt by the chaste and pure, who, without doubt, would rather beget children by mere natural desire than by voluptuous pruriency; while unchaste persons, who are impelled by this diseased passion, and bestow their love upon harlots as well as wives, are excited by a still heavier mental remorse in consequence of this carnal chastisement.

## HOW MARRIAGE IS NOW DIFFERENT SINCE THE EXISTENCE OF SIN

God forbid that we should say, what this man pretends we say, “Such marriages as are now enacted are the invention of the devil.” Why, they are absolutely the same marriages as God made at the very first. For this blessing of His, which He appointed for the procreation of mankind, He has not taken away even from men under condemnation, any more than He has deprived them of their senses and bodily limbs, which are no doubt His gifts, although they are condemned to die by an already incurred retribution. This, I say, is the marriage whereof it was said (only excepting the great sacrament of Christ and the Church, which the institution prefigured): “For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.” For this, no doubt, was said before sin; and if no one had sinned, it might have been done without shameful lust. And now, although it is not done without that, in the body of this death, there is that nevertheless which does not cease to be done so that a man may cleave to his wife, and they twain be one flesh. When, therefore, it is alleged that marriage is now one thing, but might have been another had no one sinned, this is not predicated of its nature, but of a certain quality which has undergone a change for the worse. Just as a man is said to be different, though he is actually the same individual, when he has changed his manner of life either for the better or the worse; for as a righteous man he is one thing, and as a sinful man another, though the man himself be really the same individual. In like manner, marriage without shameful lust is one thing, and marriage with shameful lust is another. When, however, a woman is lawfully united to her husband in accordance with the true constitution of wedlock, and fidelity to what is due to the flesh is kept free from the sin of adultery, and so children are lawfully begotten, it is actually the very same marriage which God instituted at first, although by his primeval inducement to sin, the devil inflicted a heavy wound, not, indeed, on marriage itself, but on man and woman by whom marriage is made, by his prevailing on them to disobey God,—a sin which is requited in the course of the divine judgment by the reciprocal disobedience of man’s own members. United in this matrimonial state, although they were ashamed of

their nakedness, still they were not by any means able altogether to lose the blessedness of marriage which God appointed.

#### CHAPTER 55 [XXXIII.]

##### LUST IS A DISEASE; THE WORD "PASSION" IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL SENSE

He then passes on from those who are united in marriage to those who are born of it. It is in relation to these that we have to encounter the most laborious discussions with the new heretics in connection with our subject. Impelled by some hidden instinct from God, he makes avowals which go far to untie the whole knot. For in his desire to raise greater odium against us, because we had said that infants are born in sin even of lawful wedlock, he makes the following observation: "You assert that they, indeed, who have not been ever born might possibly have been good; those, however, who have peopled the world, and for whom Christ died, you decide to be the work of the devil, born in a disordered state, and guilty from the beginning. Therefore," he continues, "I have shown that you are doing nothing else than denying that God is the Creator of the men who actually exist." I beg to say, that I declare none but God to be the Creator of all men, however true it be that all are born in sin, and must perish unless born again. It was, indeed, the sinful corruption which had been sown in them by the devil's persuasion that became the means of their being born in sin; not the created nature of which men are composed. Shameful lust, however, could not excite our members, except at our own will, if it were not a disease. Nor would even the lawful and honourable cohabiting of husband and wife raise a blush, with avoidance of any eye and desire of secrecy, if there were not a diseased condition about it. Moreover, the apostle would not prohibit the possession of wives in this disease, did not disease exist in it. The phrase in the Greek text, *en pathei epithumias*, is by some rendered in Latin, *in morbo desiderii vel concupiscentiae*, in the disease of desire or of concupiscence; by others, however, *in passione concupiscentiae*, in the passion of concupiscence; or however it is found otherwise in different copies: at any rate, the Latin equivalent *passio* (passion), especially in the ecclesiastical use, is usually understood as a term of censure.



## THE PELAGIANS ALLOW THAT CHRIST DIED EVEN FOR INFANTS; JULIANUS SLAYS HIMSELF WITH HIS OWN SWORD

But whatever opinion he may entertain about the shame-causing concupiscence of the flesh, I must request your attention to what he has said respecting infants (and it is in their behalf that we labour), as to their being supposed to need a Saviour, if they are not to die without salvation. I repeat his words once more: "You assert," says he to me, "that they, indeed, who have not been ever born might possibly have been good; those, however, who have peopled the world, and for whom Christ died, you decide to be the work of the devil, born in a disordered state, and guilty from the very beginning." Would that he only solved the entire controversy as he unties the knot of this question! For will he pretend to say that he merely spoke of adults in this passage? Why, the subject in hand is about infants, about human beings at their birth; and it is about these that he raises odium against us, because they are defined by us as guilty from the very first, because we declare them to be guilty, since Christ died for them. And why did Christ die for them if they are not guilty? It is entirely from them, yes, from them, we shall find the reason, wherefore he thought odium should be raised against me. He asks: "How are infants guilty, for whom Christ died?" We answer: Nay, how are infants not guilty, since Christ died for them? This dispute wants a judge to determine it. Let Christ be the Judge, and let Him tell us what is the object which has profited by His death? "This is my blood," He says, "which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins." Let the apostle, too, be His assessor in the judgment; since even in the apostle it is Christ Himself that speaks. Speaking of God the Father, he exclaims: "He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all!" I suppose that he describes Christ as so delivered up for us all, that infants in this matter are not separated from ourselves. But what need is there to dwell on this point, out of which even he no longer raises a contest? For the truth is, he not only confesses that Christ died even for infants, but he also reproves us out of this admission, because we say that these same infants are guilty for whom Christ died. Now, then, let the apostle, who says that Christ was delivered up for us all, also tell us why Christ was delivered up for us. "He was delivered," says he, "for our offences, and rose again for

our justification.” If, therefore, as even this man both confesses and professes, both admits and objects, infants, too, are included amongst those for whom Christ was delivered up; and if it was for our sins that Christ was delivered up, even infants, of course, must have original sins, for whom Christ was delivered up; He must have something in them to heal, who (as Himself affirms) is not needed as a Physician by the whole, but by the sick; He must have a reason for saving them, seeing that He came into the world, as the Apostle Paul says, “to save sinners;” He must have something in them to remit, who testifies that He shed His blood “for the remission of sins;” He must have good reason for seeking them out, who “came,” as He says, “to seek and to save that which was lost;” the Son of man must find in them something to destroy, who came for the express purpose, as the Apostle John says, “that He might destroy the works of the devil.” Now to this salvation of infants He must be an enemy, who asserts their innocence, in such a way as to deny them the medicine which is required by the hurt and wounded.

#### CHAPTER 57 [XXXIV.]

##### THE GREAT SIN OF THE FIRST MAN

Now observe what follows, as he goes on to say: “If, before sin, God created a source from which men should be born, but the devil a source from which parents were disturbed, then beyond a doubt holiness must be ascribed to those that are born, and guilt to those that produce. Since, however, this would be a most manifest condemnation of marriage; remove, I pray you, this view from the midst of the churches, and really believe that all things were made by Jesus Christ, and that without Him nothing was made.” He so speaks here, as if he would make us say, that there is a something in man’s substance which was created by the devil. The devil persuaded evil as a sin; he did not create it as a nature. No doubt he persuaded nature for man is nature; and therefore by his persuasion he corrupted it. He who wounds a limb does not, of course, create it, but he injures it. Those wounds, indeed, which are inflicted on the body produce lameness in a limb, or difficulty of motion; but they do not affect the virtue whereby a man becomes righteous: that wound, however, which has the name of sin, wounds the very life, which was being righteously lived. This

wound was at that fatal moment of the fall inflicted by the devil to a vastly wider and deeper extent than are the sins which are known amongst men. Whence it came to pass, that our nature having then and there been deteriorated by that great sin of the first man, not only was made a sinner, but also generates sinners; and yet the very weakness, under which the virtue of a holy life has drooped and died, is not really nature, but corruption; precisely as a bad state of health is not a bodily substance or nature, but disorder; very often, indeed, if not always, the ailing character of parents is in a certain way implanted, and reappears in the bodies of their children.

#### CHAPTER 58

ADAM'S SIN IS DERIVED FROM HIM TO EVERY ONE WHO IS BORN EVEN OF REGENERATE PARENTS; THE EXAMPLE OF THE OLIVE TREE AND THE WILD OLIVE

But this sin, which changed man for the worse in paradise, because it is far greater than we can form any judgment of, is contracted by every one at his birth, and is remitted only in the regenerate; and this derangement is such as to be derived even from parents who have been regenerated, and in whom the sin is remitted and covered, to the condemnation of the children born of them, unless these, who were bound by their first and carnal birth, are absolved by their second and spiritual birth. Of this wonderful fact the Creator has produced a wonderful example in the cases of the olive and the wild olive trees, in which, from the seed not only of the wild olive, but even of the good olive, nothing but a wild olive springs. Wherefore, although even in persons whose natural birth is followed by regeneration through grace, there exists this carnal concupiscence which contends against the law of the mind, yet, seeing that it is remitted in the remission of sins, it is no longer accounted to them as sin, nor is it in any degree hurtful, unless consent is yielded to its motions for unlawful deeds. Their offspring, however, being begotten not of spiritual concupiscence, but of carnal, like a wild olive of our race from the good olive, derives guilt from them by natural birth to such a degree that it cannot be liberated from that pest except by being born again. How is it, then, that this man affirms that we ascribe holiness to those who are born, and guilt to their parents? when the truth rather shows that even if there has been holiness in the parents,

original sin is inherent in their children, which is abolished in them only if they are born again.

#### CHAPTER 59 [XXXV.]

##### THE PELAGIANS CAN HARDLY VENTURE TO PLACE CONCUPISCENCE IN PARADISE BEFORE THE COMMISSION OF SIN

This being the case, let him think what he pleases about this concupiscence of the flesh and about the lust which lords it over the unchaste, has to be mastered by the chaste, and yet is to be blushed at both by the chaste and the unchaste; for I see plainly he is much pleased with it. Let him not hesitate to praise what he is ashamed to name; let him call it (as he has in fact called it) the vigour of the members, and let him not be afraid of the honor of chaste ears; let him designate it the power of the members, and let him not care about the impudence. Let him say, if his blushes permit him, that if no one had sinned, this vigour must have flourished like a flower in paradise; nor would there have been any need to cover that which would have been so moved that no one should have felt ashamed; rather, with a wife provided, it would have been ever exercised and never repressed, lest so great a pleasure should ever be denied to so vast a happiness. Far be it from being thought that such blessedness could in such a spot fail to have what it wished, or ever experience in mind or body what it disliked. And so, should the motion of lust precede men's will, then the will would immediately follow it. The wife, who ought certainly never to be absent in this happy state of things, would be urged on by it, whether about to conceive or already pregnant; and, either a child would be begotten, or a natural and laudable pleasure would be gratified,—for perish all seed rather than disappoint the appetite of so good a concupiscence. Only be sure that the united pair do not apply themselves to that use of each other which is contrary to nature, then (with so modest a reservation) let them use, as often as they would have delight, their organs of generation, created for the purpose. But what if this very use, which is contrary to nature, should peradventure give them delight; what if the aforesaid laudable lust should hanker even after such delight; I wonder whether they should pursue it because it was sweet, or loathe it because it was base? If they should pursue it to gratification, what becomes of all thought about honour? If they should

loathe it, where is the peaceful composure of so good a happiness? But at this point perchance his blushes will awake, and he will say that so great is the tranquillity of this happy state, and so entire the orderliness which may have existed in this state of things, that carnal concupiscence never preceded these persons' will: only whenever they themselves wished, would it then arise; and only then would they entertain the wish, when there was need for begetting children; and the result would be, that no seed would ever be emitted to no purpose, nor would any embrace ever ensue which would not be followed by conception and birth; the flesh would obey the will, and concupiscence would vie with it in subserviency. Well, if he says all this of the imagined happy state, he must at least be pretty sure that what he describes does not now exist among men. And even if he will not concede that lust is a corrupt condition, let him at least allow that through the disobedience of the man and woman in the happy state the very concupiscence of their flesh was corrupted, so that what would once be excited obediently and orderly is now moved disobediently and inordinately, and that to such a degree that it is not obedient to the will of even chaste-minded husbands and wives, so that it is excited when it is not wanted; and whenever it is necessary, it never, indeed, follows their will, but sometimes too hurriedly, at other times too tardily, exerts its own movements. Such, then, is the rebellion of this concupiscence which the primitive pair received for their own disobedience, and transfused by natural descent to us. It certainly was not at their bidding, but in utter disorder, that it was excited, when they covered their members, which at first were worthy to be gloried in, but had then become a ground of shame.

## CHAPTER 60

### LET NOT THE PELAGIANS INDULGE THEMSELVES IN A CRUEL DEFENCE OF INFANTS

As I said, however, let him entertain what views he likes of this lust; let him proclaim it as he pleases, praise it as much as he chooses (and he pleases much, as several of his extracts show), that the Pelagians may gratify themselves, if not with its uses, at all events with its praises, as many of them as fail to enjoy the limitation of continence enjoined in wedlock. Only let him spare the infants, so as not to praise their condition uselessly, and defend them cruelly. Let him not declare them to be safe; let him suffer

them to come, not, indeed, to Pelagius for eulogy, but to Christ for salvation. For, that this book may be now brought to a termination, since the dissertation of this man is ended, which was written on the short paper you sent me, I will close with his last words: “Really believe that all things were made by Jesus Christ, and that without Him nothing was made.” Let him grant that Jesus is Jesus even to infants; and as he confesses that all things were made by Him, in that He is God the Word, so let him acknowledge that infants, too, are saved by Him in that He is Jesus; let him, I say, do this if he would be a catholic Christian. For thus it is written in the Gospel: “And they shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins”—Jesus, because Jesus is in Latin Salvator, “Saviour.” He shall, indeed, save His people; and amongst His people surely there are infants. “From their sins” shall He save them; in infants, too, therefore, are there original sins, on account of which He can be Jesus, that is, Saviour, even unto them.

# ON PATIENCE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

DE PATIENTIA.

TRANSLATED BY REV. H. BROWNE, M.A. OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;  
LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESAN COLLEGE, CHICHESTER.

Erasmus infers from the style and language of this piece, that it is not S. Augustin's, putting it in the same category with the treatises *On Continence*, *On substance of Charity*, *On Faith of things invisible*. The Benedictine editors acknowledge that it has peculiarities of style which are calculated to move suspicion; (especially the studied assonances and rhyming endings, e.g. "cautior fuit iste in doloribus quam ille in nemoribus . . . consensit ille oblectamentis, non cessit ille tormentis," chap. 12.); yet they feel themselves bound to retain it among the genuine works by Augustin's own testimony, who mentions both this piece and that *On Continence* in his *Epistle to Darius*, 231. chap. 7. [Vol. I. 584.] That it is not named in the *Retractations* is accounted for by the circumstance that it appears to have been delivered as a sermon, see chap. 1. and 3, and Augustin did not live to fulfill his intention of composing a further book of retractations on review of his popular discourses and letters. *Ep.* 224. chap. 2. In point of matter and doctrine this treatise has nothing contrary to or not in harmony with S. Augustin's known doctrine and sentiments.

1. That virtue of the mind which is called Patience, is so great a gift of God, that even in Him who bestoweth the same upon us, that, whereby He waiteth for evil men that they may amend, is set forth by the name of Patience, [or long-suffering.] So, although in God there can be no suffering, and "patience" hath its name a *patiendo*, from suffering, yet a patient God

we not only faithfully believe, but also wholesomely confess. But the patience of God, of what kind and how great it is, His, Whom we say to be impassible, yet not impatient, nay even most patient, in words to unfold this who can be able? Ineffable is therefore that patience, as is His jealousy, as His wrath, and whatever there is like to these. For if we conceive of these as they be in us, in Him are there none. We, namely, can feel none of these without molestation: but be it far from us to surmise that the impassible nature of God is liable to any molestation. But like as He is jealous without any darkening of spirit, wroth without any perturbation, pitiful without any pain, repenteth Him without any wrongness in Him to be set right; so is He patient without aught of passion. Now therefore as concerning human patience, which we are able to conceive and beholden to have, of what sort it is, I will, as God granteth and the brevity of the present discourse alloweth, essay to set forth.

2. The patience of man, which is right and laudable and worthy of the name of virtue, is understood to be that by which we tolerate evil things with an even mind, that we may not with a mind uneven desert good things, through which we may arrive at better. Wherefore the impatient, while they will not suffer ills, effect not a deliverance from ills, but only the suffering of heavier ills. Whereas the patient who choose rather by not committing to bear, than by not bearing to commit, evil, both make lighter what through patience they suffer, and also escape worse ills in which through impatience they would be sunk. But those good things which are great and eternal they lose not, while to the evils which be temporal and brief they yield not: because “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared,” as the Apostle says, “with the future glory that shall be revealed in us.” And again he says, “This our temporal and light tribulation doth in inconceivable manner work for us an eternal weight of glory.”

3. Look we then, beloved, what hardships in labors and sorrows men endure, for things which they viciously love, and by how much they think to be made by them more happy, by so much more unhappily covet. How much for false riches, how much for vain honors, how much for affections of games and shows, is of exceeding peril and trouble most patiently borne! We see men hankering after money, glory, lasciviousness, how, that they



may arrive at their desires, and having gotten not lose them, they endure sun, rain, icy cold, waves, and most stormy tempests, the roughnesses and uncertainties of wars, the strokes of huge blows, and dreadful wounds, not of inevitable necessity but of culpable will. But these madnesses are thought, in a manner, permitted. Thus avarice, ambition, luxury, and the delights of all sorts of games and shows, unless for them some wicked deed be committed or outrage which is prohibited by human laws, are accounted to pertain to innocence: nay moreover, the man who without wrong to any shall, whether for getting or increasing of money, whether for obtaining or keeping of honors, whether in contending in the match, or in hunting, or in exhibiting with applause some theatrical spectacle, have borne great labors and pains, it is not enough that through popular vanity he is checked by no reproofs, but he is moreover extolled with praises: "Because," as it is written, "the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul." For the force of desires makes endurance of labors and pains: and no man save for that which he enjoyeth, freely takes on him to bear that which annoyeth. But these lusts, as I said, for the fulfilling of which they which are on fire with them most patiently endure much hardship and bitterness, are accounted to be permitted, and allowed by laws.

4. Nay more; for is it not so that even for open wickednesses, not to punish but to perpetrate them, men put up with many most grievous troubles? Do not authors of secular letters tell of a certain right noble parricide of his country, that hunger, thirst, cold, all these he was able to endure, and his body was patient of lack of food and warmth and sleep to a degree surpassing belief? Why speak of highway robbers, all of whom while they lie in wait for travellers endure whole nights without sleep, and that they may catch, as they pass by, men who have no thought of harm, will, no matter how foul the weather, plant in one spot their mind and body, which are full of thoughts of harm? Nay it is said that some of them are wont to torture one another by turns, to that degree that this practice and training against pains is not a whit short of pains. For, not so much perchance are they excruciated by the Judge, that through smart of pain the truth may be got at, as they are by their own comrades, that through patience of pain truth may not be betrayed. And yet in all these the patience is rather to be wondered at than praised: nay neither wondered at nor praised, seeing it is

no patience; but we must wonder at the hardness, deny the patience: for there is nothing in this rightly to be praised, nothing usefully to be imitated; and thou wilt rightly judge the mind to be all the more worthy of greater punishment, the more it yields up to vices the instruments of virtues. Patience is companion of wisdom, not handmaid of concupiscence: patience is the friend of a good conscience, not the foe of innocence.

5. When therefore thou shall see any man suffer aught patiently, do not straightway praise it as patience; for this is only shown by the cause of suffering. When it is a good cause, then is it true patience: when that is not polluted by lust, then is this distinguished from falsity. But when that is placed in crime, then is this much misplaced in name. For not just as all who know are partakers of knowledge, just so are all who suffer partakers of patience: but they which rightly use the suffering, these in verity of patience are praised, these with the prize of patience are crowned.

6. But yet, seeing that for lusts' sake, or even wickednesses, seeing, in a word, that for this temporal life and weal men do wonderfully bear the brunt of many horrible sufferings, they much admonish us how great things ought to be borne for the sake of a good life, that it may also hereafter be eternal life, and without any bound of time, without waste or loss of any advantage, in true felicity secure. The Lord saith, "In your patience ye shall possess your souls:" He saith not, your farms, your praises, your luxuries; but, "your souls." If then the soul endures so great sufferings that it may possess that whereby it may be lost, how great ought it to bear that it may not be lost? And then, to mention a thing not culpable, if it bear so great sufferings for saving of the flesh under the hands of chirurgeons cutting or burning the same, how great ought it to bear for saving of itself under the fury of any soever enemies? Seeing that leeches, that the body may not die, do by pains consult for the body's good; but enemies by threatening the body with pains and death, would urge us on to the slaying of soul and body in hell.

7. Though indeed the welfare even of the body is then more providently consulted for if its temporal life and welfare be disregarded for righteousness' sake, and its pain or death most patiently for righteousness' sake endured. Since it is of the body's redemption which is to be in the end,

that the Apostle speaks, where he says, “Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting the adoption of sons, the redemption of our body.” Then he subjoins, “For in hope are we saved. But hope which is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he also hope for? But if what we see not we hope for, we do by patience wait for it.” When therefore any ills do torture us indeed, yet not extort from us ill works, not only is the soul possessed through patience; but even when through patience the body itself for a time is afflicted or lost, it is unto eternal stability and salvation resumed, and hath through grief and death an inviolable health and happy immortality laid up for itself. Whence the Lord Jesus exhorting his Martyrs to patience, hath promised of the very body a future perfect entireness, without loss, I say not of any limb, but of a single hair. “Verily I say unto you,” saith He, “a hair of your head shall not perish.” That so, because, as the Apostle says, “no man ever hated his own flesh,” a faithful man may more by patience than by impatience take vigilant care for the state of his flesh, and find amends for its present losses, how great soever they may be, in the inestimable gain of future incorruption.

8. But although patience be a virtue of the mind, yet partly the mind exercises it in the mind itself, partly in the body. In itself it exercises patience, when, the body remaining unhurt and untouched, the mind is goaded by any adversities or filthinesses of things or words, to do or to say something that is not expedient or not becoming, and patiently bears all evils that it may not itself commit any evil in work or word. By this patience we bear, even while we be sound in body, that in the midst of the offenses of this world our blessedness is deferred: of which is said what I cited a little before, “If what we see not we hope for, we do by patience wait for it.” By this patience, holy David bore the revilings of a railer, and, when he might easily have avenged himself, not only did it not, but even refrained another who was vexed and moved for him; and more put forth his kingly power by prohibiting than by exercising vengeance. Nor at that time was his body afflicted with any disease or wound, but there was an acknowledging of a time of humility, and a bearing of the will of God, for the sake of which there was a drinking of the bitterness of contumely with most patient mind. This patience the Lord taught, when, the servants being moved at the mixing in of the tares and wishing to gather them up, He said that the

householder answered, "Leave both to grow until the harvest." That, namely, must be patience put up with, which must not be in haste put away. Of this patience Himself afforded and showed an example, when, before the passion of His Body, He so bore with His disciple Judas, that ere He pointed him out as the traitor, He endured him as a thief; and before experience of bonds and cross and death, did, to those lips so full of guile, not deny the kiss of peace. All these, and whatever else there be, which it were tedious to rehearse, belong to that manner of patience, by which the mind doth, not its own sins but any evils so ever from without, patiently endure in itself, while the body remains altogether unhurt. But the other manner of patience is that by which the same mind bears any troubles and grievances whatsoever in the sufferings of the body; not as do foolish or wicked men for the sake of getting vain things or perpetrating crimes; but as is defined by the Lord, "for righteousness' sake." In both kinds, the holy Martyrs contended. For both with scornful reproofs of the ungodly were they filled, where, the body remaining intact, the mind hath its own (as it were) blows and wounds, and bears these unbroken: and in their bodies they were bound, imprisoned, vexed with hunger and thirst, tortured, gashed, torn asunder, burned, butchered; and with piety immovable submitted unto God their mind, while they were suffering in the flesh all that exquisite cruelty could devise in its mind.

9. It is indeed a greater fight of patience, when it is not a visible enemy that by persecution and rage would urge us into crime which enemy may openly and in broad day be by not consenting overcome; but the devil himself, (he who doth likewise by means of the children of infidelity, as by his vessels, persecute the children of light) doth by himself hiddenly attack us, by his rage putting us on to do or say something against God. As such had holy Job experience of him, by both temptations vexed, but in both through steadfast strength of patience and arms of piety unconquered. For first, his body being left unhurt, he lost all that he had, in order that the mind, before excruciation of the flesh, might through withdrawal of the things which men are wont to prize highly, be broken, and he might say something against God upon loss of the things for the sake of which he was thought to worship Him. He was smitten also with sudden bereavement of all his sons so that whom he had begotten one by one he should lose all at once, as

though their numerousness had been not for the adorning of his felicity, but for the increasing of his calamity. But where, having endured these things, he remained immovable in his God, he cleaved to His will, Whom it was not possible to lose but by his own will; and in place of the things he had lost he held Him who took them away, in Whom he should find what should never be lost. For He that took them away was not that enemy who had will of hurting, but He who had given to that enemy the power of hurting. The enemy next attacked also the body, and now not those things which were in the man from without, but the man himself, in whatever part he could, he smote. From the head to the feet were burning pains, were crawling worms, were running sores; still in the rotting body the mind remained entire, and horrid as were the tortures of the consuming flesh, with inviolate piety and uncorrupted patience it endured them all. There stood the wife, and instead of giving her husband any help, was suggesting blasphemy against God. For we are not to think that the devil, in leaving her when he took away the sons, went to work as one unskilled in mischief: rather, how necessary she was to the tempter, he had already learned in Eve. But now he had not found a second Adam whom he might take by means of a woman. More cautious was Job in his hours of sadness, than Adam in his bowers of gladness, the one was overcome in the midst of pleasant things, the other overcame in the midst of pains; the one consented to that which seemed delightful, this other quailed not in torments most affrightsome. There stood his friends too, not to console him in his evils, but to suspect evil in him. For while he suffered so great sorrows, they believed him not innocent, nor did their tongue forbear to say that which his conscience had not to say; that so amid ruthless tortures of the body, his mind also might be beaten with truthless reproaches. But he, bearing in his flesh his own pains, in his heart others' errors, reproved his wife for her folly, taught his friends wisdom, preserved patience in each and all.

10. To this man let them look who put themselves to death when they are sought for to have life put upon them; and by bereaving themselves of the present, deny and refuse also that which is to come. Why, if people were driving them to deny Christ or to do any thing contrary to righteousness, like true Martyrs, they ought rather to bear all patiently than to dare death impatiently. If it could be right to do this for the sake of running away from

evils, holy Job would have killed himself, that being in so great evils, in his estate, in his sons, in his limbs, through the devil's cruelty, he might escape them all. But he did it not. Far be it from him, a wise man, to commit upon himself what not even that unwise woman suggested. And if she had suggested it, she would with good reason here also have had that answer which she had when suggesting blasphemy; "Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women. If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not bear evil?" Seeing even he also would have lost patience, if either by blasphemy as she had suggested, or by killing himself which not even she had dared to speak of, he should die, and be among them of whom it is written, "Woe unto them that have lost patience!" and rather increase than escape pains, if after the death of his body he should be hurried off to punishment either of blasphemers, or of murderers, or of them which are worse even than parricides. For if a parricide be on that account more wicked than any homicide, because he kills not merely a man but a near relative; and among parricides too, the nearer the person killed, the greater criminal he is judged to be: without doubt worse still is he who kills himself, because there is none nearer to a man than himself. What then do these miserable persons mean, who, though both here they have inflicted pain upon themselves, and hereafter not only for their impiety towards God but for the very cruelty which they have exercised upon themselves will deservedly suffer pains of His inflicting, do yet seek moreover the glories of Martyrs? since, even if for the true testimony of Christ they suffered persecution, and killed themselves, that they might not suffer any thing from their persecutors, it would be rightly said to them, "Woe unto them which have lost patience!" For how hath patience her just reward, if even an impatient suffering receives the crown? or how shall that man be judged innocent, to whom is said, "Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself," if he commit murder upon himself which he is forbidden to commit upon his neighbor?

11. Let then the Saints hear from holy Scripture the precepts of patience: "My son, when thou comest to the service of God, stand thou in righteousness and fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation: bring thine heart low, and bear up; that in the last end thy life may increase. All that shall come upon thee receive thou, and in pain bear up, and in thy humility

have patience. For in the fire gold and silver is proved, but acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation.” And in another place we read: “My son, faint not thou in the discipline of the Lord, neither be wearied when thou art chidden of Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” What is here set down, “son whom He receiveth,” the same in the above mentioned testimony is, “acceptable men.” For this is just, that we who from our first felicity of Paradise for contumacious appetite of things to enjoy were dismissed, through humble patience of things that annoy may be received back: driven away for doing evil, brought back by suffering evil: there against righteousness doing ill, here for righteousness’ sake patient of ills.

12. But concerning true patience, worthy of the name of this virtue, whence it is to be had, must now be inquired. For there are some who attribute it to the strength of the human will, not which it hath by Divine assistance, but which it hath of free-will. Now this error is a proud one: for it is the error of them which abound, of whom it is said in the Psalm, “A scornful reproof to them which abound, and a despising to the proud.” It is not therefore that “patience of the poor” which “perisheth not forever.” For these poor receive it from that Rich One, to Whom is said, “My God art Thou, because my goods Thou needest not:” of Whom is “every good gift, and every perfect gift;” to Whom crieth the needy and the poor, and in asking, seeking, knocking, saith, “My God, deliver me from the hand of the sinner, and from the hand of the lawless and unjust: because Thou art my patience, O Lord, my hope from my youth up.” But these which abound, and disdain to be in want before God, lest they receive of Him true patience, they which glory in their own false patience, seek to “confound the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his hope.” Nor do they regard, seeing they are men, and attribute so much to their own, that is, to the human will, that they run into that which is written, “Cursed is every one who putteth his hope in man.” Whence even if it chance them that they do bear up under any hardships or difficulties, either that they may not displease men, or that they may not suffer worse, or in self-pleasing and love of their own presumption, do with most proud will bear up under these same, it is meet that concerning patience this be said unto them, which concerning wisdom the blessed Apostle James saith, “This wisdom cometh not from above, but is earthly,

animal, devilish.” For why may there not be a false patience of the proud, as there is a false wisdom of the proud? But from Whom cometh true wisdom, from Him cometh also true patience. For to Him singeth that poor in spirit, “Unto God is my soul subjected, because from Him is my patience.”

13. But they answer and speak, saying, “If the will of man without any aid of God by strength of free choice bears so many grievous and horrible distresses, whether in mind or body, that it may enjoy the delight of this mortal life and of sins, why may it not be that in the same manner the self-same will of man by the same strength of free-choice, not thereunto looking to be aided of God, but unto itself by natural possibility sufficing, doth, in all of labor or sorrow that is put upon it, for righteousness and eternal life’s sake most patiently sustain the same? Or is it so, say they, that the will of the unjust is sufficient, without aid of God, for them, yea even to exercise themselves in undergoing torture for iniquity, and before they be tortured by others; sufficient the will of them which love the respiting of this life that, without aid of God, they should in the midst of most atrocious and protracted torments persevere in a lie, lest confessing their misdeeds they be ordered to be put to death; and not sufficient the will of the just, unless strength be put into them from above, that whatever be their pains, they should, either for beauty’s sake of very righteousness or for love of eternal life, bear the same?”

14. They which say these things, do not understand that as well each one of the wicked is in that measure for endurance of any ills more hard, in what measure the lust of the world is mightier in him; as also that each one of the just is in that measure for endurance of any ills more brave, in what measure in him the love of God is mightier. But lust of the world hath its beginning from choice of the will, its progress from enjoyableness of pleasure, its confirmation from the chain of custom, whereas “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,” not verily from ourselves, but “by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.” And therefore from Him cometh the patience of the just, by Whom is shed abroad their love (of Him). Which love (of charity) the Apostle praising and setting off, among its other good qualities, saith, that it “beareth all things.” “Charity,” saith he, “is magnanimous.” And a little after he saith, “endureth all things.” The greater



then is in saints the charity (or love) of God, the more do they endure all things for Him whom they love, and the greater in sinners the lust of the world, the more do they endure all things for that which they lust after. And consequently from that same source cometh true patience of the righteous, from which there is in them the love of God; and from that same source the false patience of the unrighteous, from which is in them the lust of the world. With regard to which the Apostle John saith; “Love not the world, neither the things that be in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: because all that is in the world, is lust of the flesh, and lust of the eyes, and pride of life; which is not of the Father, but is of the world.” This concupiscence, then, which is not of the Father, but is of the world, in what measure it shall in any man be more vehement and ardent, in that measure becometh each more patient of all troubles and sorrows for that which he lusteth after. Therefore, as we said above, this is not the patience which descendeth from above, but the patience of the godly is from above, coming down from the Father of lights. And so that is earthly, this heavenly; that animal, this spiritual; that devilish, this Godlike. Because concupiscence, whereof it cometh that persons sinning suffer all things stubbornly, is of the world; but charity, whereof cometh that persons living aright suffer all things bravely, is of God. And therefore to that false patience it is possible that, without aid of God, the human will may suffice; harder, in proportion as it is more eager of lust, and bearing ills with the more endurance the worse itself becometh: while to this, which is true patience, the human will, unless aided and inflamed from above, doth not suffice, for the very reason that the Holy Spirit is the fire thereof; by Whom unless it be kindled to love that impassible Good, it is not able to bear the ill which it suffereth.

15. For, as the Divine utterances testify, “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him.” Whoso therefore contends that love of God may be had without aid of God, what else does he contend, but that God may be had without God? Now what Christian would say this, which no madman would venture to say? Therefore in the Apostle, true, pious, faithful patience, saith exultingly, and by the mouth of the Saints; “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it

is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us:" not through ourselves, but, "through Him that loved us." And then he goes on and adds; "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is that "love of God" which "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." But the concupiscence of the bad, by reason of which there is in them a false patience, "is not of the Father," as saith the Apostle John, but is of the world.

16. Here some man shall say; "If the concupiscence of the bad, whereby it comes that they bear all evils for that which they lust after, be of the world, how is it said to be of their will?" As if, truly, they were not themselves also of the world, when they love the world, forsaking Him by Whom the world was made. For "they serve the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever." Whether then by the word "world," the Apostle John signifies lovers of the world, the will, as it is of themselves, is therefore of the world: or whether under the name of the world he comprises heaven and earth, and all that is therein, that is the creature universally, it is plain that the will of the creature, not being that of the Creator, is of the world. For which cause to such the Lord saith, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world, I am not of this world." And to the Apostle He saith, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own." But lest they should arrogate more unto themselves than their measure craved, and when He said that they were not of the world, should imagine this to be of nature, not of grace, therefore He saith, "But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." It follows, that they once were of the world: for, that they might not be of the world, they were chosen out of the world.

17. Now this election the Apostle demonstrating to be, not of merits going before in good works, but election of grace, saith thus: "And in this time a remnant by election of grace is saved. But if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace." This is election of grace; that is,

election in which through the grace of God men are elected: this, I say, is election of grace which goes before all good merits of men. For if it be to any good merits that it is given, then is it no more gratuitously given, but is paid as a debt, and consequently is not truly called grace; where “reward,” as the same Apostle saith, “is not imputed as grace, but as debt.” Whereas if, that it may be true grace, that is, gratuitous, it find nothing in man to which it is due of merit, (which thing is well understood in that saying, “Thou wilt save them for nothing,” ) then assuredly itself gives the merits, not to merits is given. Consequently it goes before even faith, from which it is that all good works begin. “For the just,” as is written, “shall live by faith.” But, moreover, grace not only assists the just, but also justifies the ungodly. And therefore even when it does aid the just and seems to be rendered to his merits, not even then does it cease to be grace, because that which it aids it did itself bestow. With a view therefore to this grace, which precedes all good merits of man, not only was Christ put to death by the ungodly, but “died for the ungodly.” And ere that He died, He elected the Apostles, not of course then just, but to be justified: to whom He saith, “I have chosen you out of the world.” For to whom He said, “Ye are not of the world,” and then, lest they should account themselves never to have been of the world, presently added, “But I have chosen you out of the world;” assuredly that they should not be of the world was by His own election of them conferred upon them. Wherefore, if it had been through their own righteousness, not through His grace, that they were elected, they would not have been chosen out of the world, because they would already not be of the world if already they were just. And again, if the reason why they were elected was, that they were already just, they had already first chosen the Lord. For who can be righteous but by choosing righteousness? “But the end of the law is Christ, for righteousness is to every one that believeth. Who is made unto us wisdom of God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” He then is Himself our righteousness.

18. Whence also the just of old, before the Incarnation of the Word, in this faith of Christ, and in this true righteousness, (which thing Christ is unto us,) were justified; believing this to come which we believe come: and they themselves by grace were saved through faith, not of themselves, but by the

gift of God, not of works, lest haply they should be lifted up. For their good works did not come before God's mercy, but followed it. For to them was it said, and by them written, long ere Christ was come in the flesh, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will show compassion on whom I will have compassion." From which words of God the Apostle Paul, should so long after say; "It is not therefore of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." It is also their own voice, long ere Christ was come in the flesh, "My God, His mercy shall prevent me." How indeed could they be aliens from the faith of Christ, by whose charity even Christ was fore-announced unto us; without the faith of Whom, not any of mortals either hath been, or is, or ever shall be able to be, righteous? If then, being already just, the Apostles were elected by Christ, they would have first chosen Him, that just men might be chosen, because without Him they could not be just. But it was not so: as Himself saith to them, "Not ye have chosen Me, but I have chosen you." Of which the Apostle John speaks, "Not that we loved God, but that He loved us."

19. Since the case is so, what is man, while in this life he uses his own proper will, ere he choose and love God, but unrighteous and ungodly? "What," I say, "is man," a creature going astray from the Creator, unless his Creator "be mindful of him," and choose him freely, and love him freely? Because he is himself not able to choose or love, unless being first chosen and loved he be healed, because by choosing blindness he perceiveth not, and by loving laziness is soon wearied. But perchance some man may say: In what manner is it that God first chooses and loves unjust men, that He may justify them, when it is written, "Thou hatest, Lord, all that work iniquity?" In what way, think we, but in a wonderful and ineffable manner? And yet even we are able to conceive, that the good Physician both hates and loves the sick man: hates him, because he is sick; loves him, that he may drive away his sickness.

20. Let thus much have been said with regard to charity, without which in us there cannot be true patience, because in good men it is the love of God which endureth all things, as in bad men the lust of the world. But this love is in us by the Holy Spirit which was given us. Whence, of Whom cometh in us love, of Him cometh patience. But the lust of the world, when it

patiently bears the burdens of any manner of calamity, boasts of the strength of its own will, like as of the stupor of disease, not robustness of health. This boasting is insane: it is not the language of patience, but of dotage. A will like this in that degree seems more patient of bitter ills, in which it is more greedy of temporal good things, because more empty of eternal.

21. But if it be goaded on and inflamed with deceitful visions and unclean incentives by the devilish spirit, associated and conspiring therewith in malignant agreement, this spirit makes the will of the man either frantic with error, or burning with appetite of some worldly delight; and hence, it seems to show a marvellous endurance of intolerable evils: but yet it does not follow from this that an evil will without instigation of another and unclean spirit, like as a good will without aid of the Holy Spirit, cannot exist. For that there may be an evil will even without any spirit either seducing or inciting, is sufficiently clear in the instance of the devil himself, who is found to have become a devil, not through some other devil, but of his own proper will. An evil will therefore, whether it be hurried on by lust, whether called back by fear, whether expanded by gladness, whether contracted by sadness, and in all these perturbations of mind enduring and making light of whatever are to others, or at another time, more grievous, this evil will may, without another spirit to goad it on, seduce itself, and in lapsing by defection from the higher to the lower, the more pleasant it shall account that thing to be which it seeks to get or fears to lose, or rejoices to have gotten, or grieves to have lost, the more tolerably for its sake bear what is less for it to suffer than that is to be enjoyed. For whatever that thing be, it is of the creature, of which one knows the pleasure. Because in some sort, the creature loved approaches itself to the creature loving in fond contact and connection, to the giving experience of its sweetness.

22. But the pleasure of the Creator, of which is written, “And from the river of Thy pleasure wilt Thou give them to drink,” is of far other kind, for it is not, like us, a creature. Unless then its love be given to us from thence there is no source whence it may be in us. And consequently, a good will, by which we love God, cannot be in man, save in whom God also worketh to will. This good will therefore, that is, a will faithfully subjected to God, a will set on fire by sanctity of that ardor which is above, a will which loves

God and his neighbor for God's sake; whether through love, of which the Apostle Peter makes answer, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee;" whether through fear, of which says the Apostle Paul, "In fear and trembling work out your own salvation;" whether through joy, of which he says, "In hope rejoicing, in tribulation patient;" whether through sorrow, with which he says he had great grief for his brethren; in whatever way it endure what bitterness and hardships soever, it is the love of God which "endureth all things," and which is not shed abroad in our hearts but by the Holy Spirit given unto us. Whereof piety makes no manner of doubt, but, as the charity of them which holily love, so the patience of them which piously endure, is the gift of God. For it cannot be that the divine Scripture deceiveth or is deceived, which not only in the Old Books hath testimonies of this thing, when it is said unto God, "My Patience art Thou," and, "From Him is my patience;" and where another prophet saith, that we receive the spirit of fortitude; but also in the Apostolic writings we read, "Because unto you is given on behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but to suffer for Him." Therefore let not that make the mind to be as of its own merit uplifted, wherewith he is told that he is of Another's mercy gifted.

23. But if moreover any not having charity, which pertaineth to the unity of spirit and the bond of peace whereby the Catholic Church is gathered and knit together, being involved in any schism, doth, that he may not deny Christ, suffer tribulations, straits, hunger, nakedness, persecution, perils, prisons, bonds, torments, swords, or flames, or wild beasts, or the very cross, through fear of hell and everlasting fire; in nowise is all this to be blamed, nay rather this also is a patience meet to be praised. For we cannot say that it would have been better for him that by denying Christ he should suffer none of these things, which he did suffer by confessing Him: but we must account that it will perhaps be more tolerable for him in the judgment, than if by denying Christ he should avoid all those things: so that what the Apostle saith, "If I shall give my body to be burned, but have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," should be understood to profit nothing for obtaining the kingdom of heaven, but not for having more tolerable punishment to undergo in the last judgment.

24. But it may well be asked, whether this patience likewise be the gift of God, or to be attributed to strength of the human will, by which patience, one who is separated from the Church doth, not for the error which separated him but for the truth of the Sacrament or Word which hath remained with him, for fear of pains eternal suffer pains temporal. For we must take heed lest haply, if we affirm that patience to be the gift of God, they in whom it is should be thought to belong also to the kingdom of God; but if we deny it to be the gift of God, we should be compelled to allow that without aid and gift of God there can be in the will of man somewhat of good. Because it is not to be denied that it is a good thing that a man believe he shall undergo pain of eternal punishment if he shall deny Christ, and for that faith endure and make light of any manner of punishment of man's inflicting.

25. So then, as we are not to deny that this is the gift of God, we are thus to understand that there be some gifts of God possessed by the sons of that Jerusalem which is above, and free, and mother of us all, (for these are in some sort the hereditary possessions in which we are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ:") but some other which may be received even by the sons of concubines to whom carnal Jews and schismatics or heretics are compared. For though it be written, "Cast out the bondmaid and her son, for the son of the bondmaid shall not be heir with my son Isaac:" and though God said to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called:" which the Apostle hath so interpreted as to say, "That is, not they which be sons of the flesh, these be the sons of God; but the sons of the promise are counted for the seed;" that we might understand the seed of Abraham in regard of Christ to pertain by reason of Christ to the sons of God, who are Christ's body and members, that is to say, the Church of God, one, true, very-begotten, catholic, holding the godly faith; not the faith which works through elation or fear, but "which worketh by love;" nevertheless, even the sons of the concubines, when Abraham sent them away from his son Isaac, he did not omit to bestow upon them some gifts, that they might not be left in every way empty, but not that they should be held as heirs. For so we read: "And Abraham gave all his estate unto Isaac; and to the sons of his concubines gave Abraham gifts, and sent them away from his son Isaac." If then we be sons of Jerusalem the free, let us understand that other be the gifts of them

which are put out of the inheritance, other the gifts of them which be heirs. For these be the heirs, to whom is said, “Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

26. Cry we therefore with the spirit of charity, and until we come to the inheritance in which we are alway to remain, let us be, through love which becometh the free-born, not through fear which becometh bondmen, patient of suffering. Cry we, so long as we are poor, until we be with that inheritance made rich. Seeing how great earnest thereof we have received, in that Christ to make us rich made Himself poor; Who being exalted unto the riches which are above, there was sent One Who should breathe into our hearts holy longings, the Holy Spirit. Of these poor, as yet believing, not yet beholding; as yet hoping, not yet enjoying; as yet sighing in desire, not yet reigning in felicity; as yet hungering and thirsting, not yet satisfied: of these poor, then, “the patience shall not perish for ever:” not that there will be patience there also, where aught to endure shall not be; but “will not perish,” meaning that it will not be unfruitful. But its fruit it will have for ever, therefore it “shall not perish for ever.” For he who labors in vain, when his hope fails for which he labored, says with good cause, “I have lost so much labor:” but he who comes to the promise of his labor says, congratulating himself, I have not lost my labor. Labor then is said not to perish (or be lost), not because it lasts perpetually, but because it is not spent in vain. So also the patience of the poor of Christ (who yet are to be made rich as heirs of Christ) shall not perish for ever: not because there also we shall be commanded patiently to bear, but because for that which we have here patiently borne, we shall enjoy eternal bliss. He will put no end to everlasting felicity, Who giveth temporal patience unto the will: because both the one and the other is of Him bestowed as a gift upon charity, Whose gift that charity is also.



# ON THE CATECHISING OF THE UNINSTRUCTED

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

IN ONE BOOK.

TRANSLATED BY

REV. S. D. F. SALMOND, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, ABERDEEN.

# CONTENTS

## ON THE CATECHISING OF THE UNINSTRUCTED

### Chapter 1

How Augustin Writes in Answer to a Favor Asked by a Deacon of Carthage

### Chapter 2

How It Often Happens that a Discourse Which Gives Pleasure to the Hearer is Distasteful to the Speaker; And What Explanation is to Be Offered of that Fact

### Chapter 3

Of the Full Narration to Be Employed in Catechising

### Chapter 4

That the Great Reason for the Advent of Christ Was the Commendation of Love

### Chapter 5

That the Person Who Comes for Catechetical Instruction is to Be Examined with Respect to His Views, on Desiring to Become a Christian

### Chapter 6

Of the Way to Commence the Catechetical Instruction, and of the Narration of Facts from the History of the World's Creation on to the Present Times of the Church

### Chapter 7

Of the Exposition of the Resurrection, the Judgment, and Other Subjects, Which Should Follow This Narration

### Chapter 8

Of the Method to Be Pursued in Catechising Those Who Have Had a Liberal Education

### Chapter 9

Of the Method in Which Grammarians and Professional Speakers are to Be Dealt with

### Chapter 10

Of the Attainment of Cheerfulness in the Duty of Catechising, and of Various Causes Producing Weariness in the Catechumen

### Chapter 11

Of the Remedy for the Second Source of Weariness

### Chapter 12

Of the Remedy for the Third Source of Weariness

Chapter 13

Of the Remedy for the Fourth Source of Weariness

Chapter 14

Of the Remedy Against the Fifth and Sixth Sources of Weariness

Chapter 15

Of the Method in Which Our Address Should Be Adapted to Different Classes of Hearers

Chapter 16

A Specimen of a Catechetical Address; And First, the Case of a Catechumen with Worthy Views

Chapter 17

The Specimen of Catechetical Discourse Continued, in Reference Specially to the Reproof of False Aims on the Catechumen's Part

Chapter 18

Of What is to Be Believed on the Subject of the Creation of Man and Other Objects

Chapter 19

Of the Co-Existence of Good and Evil in the Church, and Their Final Separation

Chapter 20

Of Israel's Bondage in Egypt, Their Deliverance, and Their Passage Through the Red Sea

Chapter 21

Of the Babylonish Captivity, and the Things Signified Thereby

Chapter 22

Of the Six Ages of the World

Chapter 23

Of the Mission of the Holy Ghost Fifty Days After Christ's Resurrection

Chapter 24

Of the Church in Its Likeness to a Vine Sprouting and Suffering Pruning

Chapter 25

Of Constancy in the Faith of the Resurrection

Chapter 26

Of the Formal Admission of the Catechumen, and of the Signs Therein Made Use of

Chapter 27

Of the Prophecies of the Old Testament in Their Visible Fulfillment in the Church

# ON THE CATECHISING OF THE UNINSTRUCTED

## CHAPTER I

HOW AUGUSTIN WRITES IN ANSWER TO A FAVOR ASKED BY A DEACON OF  
CARTHAGE

1. You have requested me, brother Deogratias, to send you in writing something which might be of service to you in the matter of catechising the uninstructed. For you have informed me that in Carthage, where you hold the position of a deacon, persons, who have to be taught the Christian faith from its very rudiments, are frequently brought to you by reason of your enjoying the reputation of possessing a rich gift in catechising, due at once to an intimate acquaintance with the faith, and to an attractive method of discourse; but that you almost always find yourself in a difficulty as to the manner in which a suitable declaration is to be made of the precise doctrine, the belief of which constitutes us Christians: regarding the point at which our statement of the same ought to commence, and the limit to which it should be allowed to proceed: and with respect to the question whether, when our narration is concluded, we ought to make use of any kind of exhortation, or simply specify those precepts in the observance of which the person to whom we are discoursing may know the Christian life and profession to be maintained. At the same time, you have made the confession and complaint that it has often befallen you that in the course of a lengthened and languid address you have become profitless and distasteful even to yourself, not to speak of the learner whom you have been endeavoring to instruct by your utterance, and the other parties who have been present as hearers; and that you have been constrained by these straits to put upon me the constraint of that love which I owe to you, so that I may not feel it a burdensome thing among all my engagements to write you something on this subject.

2. As for myself then, if, in the exercise of those capacities which through the bounty of our Lord I am enabled to present, the same Lord requires me to offer any manner of aid to those whom He has made brethren to me, I feel constrained not only by that love and service which is due from me to you on the terms of familiar friendship, but also by that which I owe universally to my mother the Church, by no means to refuse the task, but rather to take it up with a prompt and devoted willingness. For the more extensively I desire to see the treasure of the Lord distributed, the more does it become my duty, if I ascertain that the stewards, who are my fellow-servants, find any difficulty in laying it out, to do all that lies in my power to the end that they may be able to accomplish easily and expeditiously what they sedulously and earnestly aim at.

## CHAPTER 2

HOW IT OFTEN HAPPENS THAT A DISCOURSE WHICH GIVES PLEASURE TO THE HEARER IS DISTASTEFUL TO THE SPEAKER; AND WHAT EXPLANATION IS TO BE OFFERED OF THAT FACT

3. But as regards the idea thus privately entertained by yourself in such efforts, I would not have you to be disturbed by the consideration that you have often appeared to yourself to be delivering a poor and wearisome discourse. For it may very well be the case that the matter has not so presented itself to the person whom you were trying to instruct, but that what you were uttering seemed to you to be unworthy of the ears of others, simply because it was your own earnest desire that there should be something better to listen to. Indeed with me, too, it is almost always the fact that my speech displeases myself. For I am covetous of something better, the possession of which I frequently enjoy within me before I commence to body it forth in intelligible words: and then when my capacities of expression prove inferior to my inner apprehensions, I grieve over the inability which my tongue has betrayed in answering to my heart. For it is my wish that he who hears me should have the same complete understanding of the subject which I have myself; and I perceive that I fail to speak in a manner calculated to effect that, and that this arises mainly from the circumstance that the intellectual apprehension diffuses itself through the mind with something like a rapid flash, whereas the utterance is

slow, and occupies time, and is of a vastly different nature, so that, while this latter is moving on, the intellectual apprehension has already withdrawn itself within its secret abodes. Yet, in consequence of its having stamped certain impressions of itself in a marvellous manner upon the memory, these prints endure with the brief pauses of the syllables; and as the outcome of these same impressions we form intelligible signs, which get the name of a certain language, either the Latin, or the Greek, or the Hebrew, or some other. And these signs may be objects of thought, or they may also be actually uttered by the voice. On the other hand however, the impressions themselves are neither Latin, nor Greek, nor Hebrew, nor peculiar to any other race whatsoever, but are made good in the mind just as looks are in the body. For anger is designated by one word in Latin, by another in Greek, and by different terms in other languages, according to their several diversities. But the look of the angry man is neither (peculiarly) Latin nor (peculiarly) Greek. Thus it is that when a person says *Iratum sum*, he is not understood by every nation, but only by the Latins; whereas, if the mood of his mind when it is kindling to wrath comes forth upon the face and affects the look, all who have the individual within their view understand that he is angry. But, again, it is not in our power to bring out those impressions which the intellectual apprehension stamps upon the memory, and to hold them forth, as it were, to the perception of the hearers by means of the sound of the voice, in any manner parallel to the clear and evident form in which the look appears. For those former are within in the mind, while this latter is without in the body. Wherefore we have to surmise how far the sound of our mouth must be from representing that stroke of the intelligence, seeing that it does not correspond even with the impression produced upon the memory. Now, it is a common occurrence with us that, in the ardent desire to effect what is of profit to our hearer, our aim is to express ourselves to him exactly as our intellectual apprehension is at the time, when, in the very effort, we are failing in the ability to speak; and then, because this does not succeed with us, we are vexed, and we pine in weariness as if we were applying ourselves to vain labors; and, as the result of this very weariness, our discourse becomes itself more languid and pointless even than it was when it first induced such a sense of tediousness.

4. But oftentimes the earnestness of those who are desirous of hearing me shows me that my utterance is not so frigid as it seems to myself to be. From the delight, too, which they exhibit, I gather that they derive some profit from it. And I occupy myself sedulously with the endeavor not to fail in putting before them a service in which I perceive them to take in such good part what is put before them. Even, so, on your side also, the very fact that persons who require to be instructed in the faith are brought so frequently to you, ought to help you to understand that your discourse is not displeasing to others as it is displeasing to yourself; and you ought not to consider yourself unfruitful, simply because you do not succeed in setting forth in such a manner as you desire the things which you discern; for, perchance, you may be just as little able to discern them in the way you wish. For in this life who sees except as “in an enigma and through a glass”? Neither is love itself of might sufficient to rend the darkness of the flesh, and penetrate into that eternal calm from which even things which pass away derive the light in which they shine. But inasmuch as day by day the good are making advances towards the vision of that day, independent of the rolling sky, and without the invasion of the night, “which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man,” there is no greater reason why our discourse should become valueless in our own estimate, when we are engaged in teaching the uninstructed, than this,—namely, that it is a delight to us to discern in an extraordinary fashion, and a weariness to speak in an ordinary. And in reality we are listened to with much greater satisfaction, indeed, when we ourselves also have pleasure in the same work; for the thread of our address is affected by the very joy of which we ourselves are sensible, and it proceeds from us with greater ease and with more acceptance. Consequently, as regards those matters which are recommended as articles of belief, the task is not a difficult one to lay down injunctions, with respect to the points at which the narration should be commenced and ended, or with respect to the method in which the narration is to be varied, so that at one time it may be briefer, at another more lengthened, and yet at all times full and perfect; and, again, with respect to the particular occasions on which it may be right to use the shorter form, and those on which it will be proper to employ the longer. But as to the means by which all is to be done, so that every one may have pleasure in his work when he catechises (for the better he succeeds in this

the more attractive will he be),—that is what requires the greatest consideration. And yet we have not far to seek for the precept which will rule in this sphere. For if, in the matter of carnal means, God loves a cheerful giver, how much more so in that of the spiritual? But our security that this cheerfulness may be with us at the seasonable hour, is something dependent upon the mercy of Him who has given us such precepts. Therefore, in accordance with my understanding of what your own wish is, we shall discuss in the first place the subject of the method of narration, then that of the duty of delivering injunction and exhortation, and afterwards that of the attainment of the said cheerfulness, so far as God may furnish us with the ideas.

### CHAPTER 3

#### OF THE FULL NARRATION TO BE EMPLOYED IN CATECHISING

5. The narration is full when each person is catechised in the first instance from what is written in the text, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” on to the present times of the Church. This does not imply, however, either that we ought to repeat by memory the entire Pentateuch, and the entire Books of Judges, and Kings, and Esdras, and the entire Gospel and Acts of the Apostles, if we have learned all these word for word; or that we should put all the matters which are contained in these volumes into our own words, and in that manner unfold and expound them as a whole. For neither does the time admit of that, nor does any necessity demand it. But what we ought to do is, to give a comprehensive statement of all things, summarily and generally, so that certain of the more wonderful facts may be selected which are listened to with superior gratification, and which have been ranked so remarkably among the exact turning-points (of the history); that, instead of exhibiting them to view only in their wrappings, if we may so speak, and then instantly snatching them from our sight, we ought to dwell on them for a certain space, and thus, as it were, unfold them and open them out to vision, and present them to the minds of the hearers as things to be examined and admired. But as for all other details, these should be passed over rapidly, and thus far introduced and woven into the narrative. The effect of pursuing this plan is, that the particular facts which we wish to see specially commended to attention



obtain greater prominence in consequence of the others being made to yield to them; while, at the same time, neither does the learner, whose interest we are anxious to stimulate by our statement, come to these subjects with a mind already exhausted, nor is confusion induced upon the memory of the person whom we ought to be instructing by our teaching.

6. In all things, indeed, not only ought our own eye to be kept fixed upon the end of the commandment, which is “charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned,” to which we should make all that we utter refer; but in like manner ought the gaze of the person whom we are instructing by our utterance to be moved toward the same, and guided in that direction. And, in truth, for no other reason were all those things which we read in the Holy Scriptures written, previous to the Lord’s advent, but for this,—namely, that His advent might be pressed upon the attention, and that the Church which was to be, should be intimated beforehand, that is to say, the people of God throughout all nations; which Church is His body, wherewith also are united and numbered all the saints who lived in this world, even before His advent, and who believed then in His future coming, just as we believe in His past coming. For (to use an illustration) Jacob, at the time when he was being born, first put forth from the womb a hand, with which also he held the foot of the brother who was taking priority of him in the act of birth; and next indeed the head followed, and thereafter, at last, and as matter of course, the rest of the members: while, nevertheless the head in point of dignity and power has precedence, not only of those members which followed it then, but also of the very hand which anticipated it in the process of the birth, and is really the first, although not in the matter of the time of appearing, at least in the order of nature. And in an analogous manner, the Lord Jesus Christ, previous to His appearing in the flesh, and coming forth in a certain manner out of the womb of His secrecy, before the eyes of men as Man, the Mediator between God and men, “who is over all, God blessed for ever,” sent before Him, in the person of the holy patriarchs and prophets, a certain portion of His body, wherewith, as by a hand, He gave token beforetime of His own approaching birth, and also supplanted the people who were prior to Him in their pride, using for that purpose the bonds of the law, as if they were His five fingers. For through five epochs of times there was no cessation in the foretelling

and prophesying of His own destined coming; and in a manner consonant with this, he through whom the law was given wrote five books; and proud men, who were carnally minded, and sought to “establish their own righteousness,” were not filled with blessing by the open hand of Christ, but were debarred from such good by the hand compressed and closed; and therefore their feet were tied, and “they fell, while we are risen, and stand upright.” But although, as I have said, the Lord Christ did thus send before Him a certain portion of His body, in the person of those holy men who came before Him as regards the time of birth, nevertheless He is Himself the Head of the body, the Church, and all these have been attached to that same body of which He is the head, in virtue of their believing in Him whom they announced prophetically. For they were not sundered (from that body) in consequence of fulfilling their course before Him, but rather were they made one with the same by reason of their obedience. For although the hand may be put forward away before the head, still it has its connection beneath the head. Wherefore all things which were written aforetime were written in order that we might be taught thereby, and were our figures, and happened in a figure in the case of these men. Moreover they were written for our sakes, upon whom the end of the ages has come.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### THAT THE GREAT REASON FOR THE ADVENT OF CHRIST WAS THE COMMENDATION OF LOVE

7. Moreover, what greater reason is apparent for the advent of the Lord than that God might show His love in us, commending it powerfully, inasmuch as “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”? And furthermore, this is with the intent that, inasmuch as charity is “the end of the commandment,” and “the fulfilling of the law,” we also may love one another and lay down our life for the brethren, even as He laid down His life for us. And with regard to God Himself, its object is that, even if it were an irksome task to love Him, it may now at least cease to be irksome for us to return His love, seeing that “He first loved us,” and “spared not His own only Son, but delivered Him up for us all.” For there is no mightier invitation to love than to anticipate in loving; and that soul is over hard which, supposing it unwilling indeed to give love, is unwilling also to give the return of love.

But if, even in the case of criminal and sordid loves, we see how those who desire to be loved in return make it their special and absorbing business, by such proofs as are within their power, to render the strength of the love which they themselves bear plain and patent; if we also perceive how they affect to put forward an appearance of justice in what they thus offer, such as may qualify them in some sort to demand that a response be made in all fairness to them on the part of those souls which they are laboring to beguile; if, further, their own passion burns more vehemently when they observe that the minds which they are eager to possess are also moved now by the same fire: if thus, I say, it happens at once that the soul which before was torpid is excited so soon as it feels itself to be loved, and that the soul which was enkindled already becomes the more inflamed so soon as it is made cognizant of the return of its own love, it is evident that no greater reason is to be found why love should be either originated or enlarged, than what appears in the occasion when one who as yet loves not at all comes to know himself to be the object of love, or when one who is already a lover either hopes that he may yet be loved in turn, or has by this time the evidence of a response to his affection. And if this holds good even in the case of base loves, how much more in (true) friendship? For what else have we carefully to attend to in this question touching the injuring of friendship than to this, namely, not to give our friend cause to suppose either that we do not love him at all, or that we love him less than he loves us? If, indeed, he is led to entertain this belief, he will be cooler in that love in which men enjoy the interchange of intimacies one with another; and if he is not of that weak type of character to which such an offense to affection will serve as a cause of freezing off from love altogether, he yet confines himself to that kind of affection in which he loves, not with the view of enjoyment to himself, but with the idea of studying the good of others. But again it is worth our while to notice how,—although superiors also have the wish to be loved by their inferiors, and are gratified with the zealous attention paid to them by such, and themselves cherish greater affection towards these inferiors the more they become cognizant of that,—with what might of love, nevertheless, the inferior kindles so soon as he learns that he is beloved by his superior. For there have we love in its more grateful aspect, where it does not consume itself in the drought of want, but flows forth in the plenteousness of beneficence. For the former type of love is of misery,

the latter of mercy. And furthermore, if the inferior was despairing even of the possibility of his being loved by his superior, he will now be inexpressibly moved to love if the superior has of his own will condescended to show how much he loves this person who could by no means be bold enough to promise himself so great a good. But what is there superior to God in the character of Judge? and what more desperate than man in the character of sinner?—than man, I ask, who had given himself all the more unreservedly up to the wardship and domination of proud powers which are unable to make him blessed, as he had come more absolutely to despair of the possibility of his being an object of interest to that power which wills not to be exalted in wickedness, but is exalted in goodness.

8. If, therefore, it was mainly for this purpose that Christ came, to wit, that man might learn how much God loves him; and that he might learn this, to the intent that he might be kindled to the love of Him by whom he was first loved, and might also love his neighbor at the command and showing of Him who became our neighbor, in that He loved man when, instead of being a neighbor to Him, he was sojourning far apart: if, again, all divine Scripture, which was written aforetime, was written with the view of presignifying the Lord's advent; and if whatever has been committed to writing in times subsequent to these, and established by divine authority, is a record of Christ, and admonishes us of love, it is manifest that on those two commandments of love to God and love to our neighbor hang not only all the law and the prophets, which at the time when the Lord spoke to that effect were as yet the only Holy Scripture, but also all those books of the divine literature which have been written at a later period for our health, and consigned to remembrance. Wherefore, in the Old Testament there is a veiling of the New, and in the New Testament there is a revealing of the Old. According to that veiling, carnal men, understanding things in a carnal fashion, have been under the dominion, both then and now, of a penal fear. According to this revealing, on the other hand, spiritual men,—among whom we reckon at once those then who knocked in piety and found even hidden things opened to them, and others now who seek in no spirit of pride, lest even things uncovered should be closed to them,—understanding in a spiritual fashion, have been made free through the love wherewith they have been gifted. Consequently, inasmuch as there is nothing more adverse

to love than envy, and as pride is the mother of envy, the same Lord Jesus Christ, God-man, is both a manifestation of divine love towards us, and an example of human humility with us, to the end that our great swelling might be cured by a greater counteracting remedy. For here is great misery, proud man! But there is greater mercy, a humble God! Take this love, therefore, as the end that is set before you, to which you are to refer all that you say, and, whatever you narrate, narrate it in such a manner that he to whom you are discoursing on hearing may believe, on believing may hope, on hoping may love.

## CHAPTER 5

THAT THE PERSON WHO COMES FOR CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION IS TO BE EXAMINED WITH RESPECT TO HIS VIEWS, ON DESIRING TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

9. Moreover, it is on the ground of that very severity of God, by which the hearts of mortals are agitated with a most wholesome terror, that love is to be built up; so that, rejoicing that he is loved by Him whom he fears, man may have boldness to love Him in return, and yet at the same time be afraid to displease His love toward himself, even should he be able to do so with impunity. For certainly it very rarely happens, nay, I should rather say, never, that any one approaches us with the wish to become a Christian who has not been smitten with some sort of fear of God. For if it is in the expectation of some advantage from men whom he deems himself unlikely to please in any other way, or with the idea of escaping any disadvantage at the hands of men of whose displeasure or hostility he is seriously afraid, that a man wishes to become a Christian, then his wish to become one is not so earnest as his desire to feign one. For faith is not a matter of the body which does obeisance, but of the mind which believes. But unmistakeably it is often the case that the mercy of God comes to be present through the ministry of the catechiser, so that, affected by the discourse, the man now wishes to become in reality that which he had made up his mind only to feign. And so soon as he begins to have this manner of desire, we may judge him then to have made a genuine approach to us. It is true, indeed, that the precise time when a man, whom we perceive to be present with us already in the body, comes to us in reality with his mind, is a thing hidden from us. But, notwithstanding that, we ought to deal with him in such a

manner that this wish may be made to arise within him, even should it not be there at present. For no such labor is lost, inasmuch as, if there is any wish at all, it is assuredly strengthened by such action on our part, although we may be ignorant of the time or the hour at which it began. It is useful certainly, if it can be done, to get from those who know the man some idea beforehand of the state of mind in which he is, or of the causes which have induced him to come with the view of embracing religion. But if there is no other person available from whom we may gather such information, then, indeed, the man himself is to be interrogated, so that from what he says in reply we may draw the beginning of our discourse. Now if he has come with a false heart, desirous only of human advantages or thinking to escape disadvantages, he will certainly speak what is untrue. Nevertheless, the very untruth which he utters should be made the point from which we start. This should not be done, however, with the (open) intention of confuting his falsehood, as if that were a settled matter with you; but, taking it for granted that he has professed to have come with a purpose which is really worthy of approbation (whether that profession be true or false), it should rather be our aim to commend and praise such a purpose as that with which, in his reply, he has declared himself to have come; so that we may make him feel it a pleasure to be the kind of man actually that he wishes to seem to be. On the other hand, supposing him to have given a declaration of his views other than what ought to be before the mind of one who is to be instructed in the Christian faith, then by reproving him with more than usual kindness and gentleness, as a person uninstructed and ignorant, by pointing out and commending, concisely and in a grave spirit the end of Christian doctrine in its genuine reality, and by doing all this in such a manner as neither to anticipate the times of a narration, which should be given subsequently, nor to venture to impose that kind of statement upon a mind not previously set for it, you may bring him to desire that which, either in mistake or in dissimulation, he has not been desiring up to this stage.

## CHAPTER 6

OF THE WAY TO COMMENCE THE CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION, AND OF THE  
NARRATION OF FACTS FROM THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD'S CREATION ON TO THE  
PRESENT TIMES OF THE CHURCH

10. But if it happens that his answer is to the effect that he has met with some divine warning, or with some divine terror, prompting him to become a Christian, this opens up the way most satisfactorily for a commencement to our discourse, by suggesting the greatness of God's interest in us. His thoughts, however, ought certainly to be turned away from this line of things, whether miracles or dreams, and directed to the more solid path and the surer oracles of the Scriptures; so that he may also come to understand how mercifully that warning was administered to him in advance, previous to his giving himself to the Holy Scriptures. And assuredly it ought to be pointed out to him, that the Lord Himself would neither thus have admonished him and urged him on to become a Christian, and to be incorporated into the Church, nor have taught him by such signs or revelations, had it not been His will that, for his greater safety and security, he should enter upon a pathway already prepared in the Holy Scriptures, in which he should not seek after visible miracles, but learn the habit of hoping for things invisible, and in which also he should receive monitions not in sleep but in wakefulness. At this point the narration ought now to be commenced, which should start with the fact that God made all things very good, and which should be continued, as we have said, on to the present times of the Church. This should be done in such a manner as to give, for each of the affairs and events which we relate, causes and reasons by which we may refer them severally to that end of love from which neither the eye of the man who is occupied in doing anything, nor that of the man who is engaged in speaking, ought to be turned away. For if, even in handling the fables of the poets, which are but fictitious creations and things devised for the pleasure of minds whose food is found in trifles, those grammarians who have the reputation and the name of being good do nevertheless endeavor to bring them to bear upon some kind of (assumed) use, although that use itself may be only something vain and grossly bent upon the coarse nutriment of this world: how much more careful does it become us to be, not to let those genuine verities which we narrate, in consequence of any want of a well-considered account of their causes, be accepted either with a gratification which issues in no practical good, or, still less, with a cupidity which may prove hurtful! At the same time, we are not to set forth these causes in such a manner as to leave the proper course of our narration, and let our heart and our tongue indulge in digressions into the knotty questions

of more intricate discussion. But the simple truth of the explanation which we adduce ought to be like the gold which binds together a row of gems, and yet does not interfere with the choice symmetry of the ornament by any undue intrusion of itself.

## CHAPTER 7

OF THE EXPOSITION OF THE RESURRECTION, THE JUDGMENT, AND OTHER SUBJECTS, WHICH SHOULD FOLLOW THIS NARRATION

11. On the completion of this narration, the hope of the resurrection should be set forth, and, so far as the capacity and strength of the hearer will bear it, and so far also as the measure of time at our disposal will allow, we ought to handle our arguments against the vain scoffings of unbelievers on the subject of the resurrection of the body, as well as on that of the future judgment, with its goodness in relation to the good, its severity in relation to the evil, its truth in relation to all. And after the penalties of the impious have thus been declared with detestation and horror, then the kingdom of the righteous and faithful, and that supernal city and its joy, should form the next themes for our discourse. At this point, moreover, we ought to equip and animate the weakness of man in withstanding temptations and offenses, whether these emerge without or rise within the church itself; without, as in opposition to Gentiles, or Jews, or heretics; within, on the other hand, as in opposition to the chaff of the Lord's threshing-floor. It is not meant, however, that we are to dispute against each several type of perverse men, and that all their wrong opinions are to be refuted by set arrays of argumentations: but, in a manner suitable to a limited allowance of time, we ought to show how all this was foretold, and to point out of what service temptations are in the training of the faithful, and what relief there is in the example of the patience of God, who has resolved to permit them even to the end. But, again, while he is being furnished against these (adversaries), whose perverse multitudes fill the churches so far as bodily presence is concerned, the precepts of a Christian and honorable manner of life should also be briefly and befittingly detailed at the same time, to the intent that he may neither allow himself to be easily led astray in this way, by any who are drunkards, covetous, fraudulent, gamesters, adulterers, fornicators, lovers of public spectacles, wearers of unholy charms, sorcerers,



astrologers, or diviners practising any sort of vain and wicked arts, and all other parties of a similar character; nor to let himself fancy that any such course may be followed with impunity on his part, simply because he sees many who are called Christians loving these things, and engaging themselves with them, and defending them, and recommending them, and actually persuading others to their use. For as to the end which is appointed for those who persist in such a mode of life, and as to the method in which they are to be borne with in the church itself, out of which they are destined to be separated in the end,—these are subjects in which the learner ought to be instructed by means of the testimonies of the divine books. He should also, however, be informed beforehand that he will find in the church many good Christians, most genuine citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, if he sets about being such himself. And, finally, he must be sedulously warned against letting his hope rest on man. For it is not a matter that can be easily judged by man, what man is righteous. And even were this a matter which could be easily done, still the object with which the examples of righteous men are set before us is not that we may be justified by them, but that, as we imitate them, we may understand how we ourselves also are justified by their Justifier. For the issue of this will be something which must merit the highest approval,—namely this, that when the person who is hearing us, or rather, who is hearing God by us, has begun to make some progress in moral qualities and in knowledge, and to enter upon the way of Christ with ardor, he will not be so bold as to ascribe the change either to us or to himself; but he will love both himself and us, and whatever other persons he loves as friends, in Him, and for His sake who loved him when he was an enemy, in order that He might justify him and make him a friend. And now that we have advanced thus far, I do not think that you need any preceptor to tell you how you should discuss matters briefly, when either your own time or that of those who are hearing you is occupied; and how, on the other hand, you should discourse at greater length when there is more time at your command. For the very necessity of the case recommends this, apart from the counsel of any adviser.

## CHAPTER 8

### OF THE METHOD TO BE PURSUED IN CATECHISING THOSE WHO HAVE HAD A LIBERAL EDUCATION

12. But there is another case which evidently must not be overlooked. I mean the case of one coming to you to receive catchetical instruction who has cultivated the field of liberal studies, who has already made up his mind to be a Christian, and who has betaken himself to you for the express purpose of becoming one. It can scarcely fail to be the fact that a person of this character has already acquired a considerable knowledge of our Scriptures and literature; and, furnished with this, he may have come now simply with the view of being made a partaker in the sacraments. For it is customary with men of this class to inquire carefully into all things, not at the very time when they are made Christians, but previous to that, and thus early also to communicate and reason, with any whom they can reach, on the subject of the feelings of their own minds. Consequently a brief method of procedure should be adopted with these, so as not to inculcate on them, in an odious fashion things which they know already, but to pass over these with a light and modest touch. Thus we should say how we believe that they are already familiar with this and the other subject, and that we therefore simply reckon up in a cursory manner all those facts which require to be formally urged upon the attention of the uninstructed and unlearned. And we should endeavor so to proceed, that, supposing this man of culture to have been previously acquainted with any one of our themes, he may not hear it now as from a teacher; and that, in the event of his being still ignorant of any of them, he may yet learn the same while we are going over the things with which we understand him to be already familiar. Moreover, it is certainly not without advantage to interrogate the man himself as to the means by which he was induced to desire to be a Christian; so that, if you discover him to have been moved to that decision by books, whether they be the canonical writings or the compositions of literary men worth the studying, you may say something about these at the outset, expressing your approbation of them in a manner which may suit the distinct merits which they severally possess, in respect of canonical authority and of skillfully applied diligence on the part of these expounders; and, in the case of the canonical Scriptures, commending above all the most salutary modesty (of

language) displayed alongside their wonderful loftiness (of subject); while, in those other productions you notice, in accordance with the characteristic faculty of each several writer, a style of a more sonorous and, as it were more rounded eloquence adapted to minds that are prouder, and, by reason thereof weaker. We should certainly also elicit from him some account of himself, so that he may give us to understand what writer he chiefly perused, and with what books he was more familiarly conversant, as these were the means of moving him to wish to be associated with the church. And when he has given us this information, then if the said books are known to us, or if we have at least ecclesiastical report as our warrant for taking them to have been written by some catholic man of note, we should joyfully express our approbation. But if, on the other hand, he has fallen upon the productions of some heretic and in ignorance, it may be, has retained in his mind anything which the true faith condemns, and yet supposes it to be catholic doctrine, then we must set ourselves sedulously to teach him, bringing before him (in its rightful superiority) the authority of the Church universal, and of other most learned men reputed both for their disputations and for their writings in (the cause of) its truth. At the same time, it is to be admitted that even those who have departed this life as genuine catholics, and have left to posterity some Christian writings, in certain passages of their small works, either in consequence of their failing to be understood, or (as the way is with human infirmity) because they lack ability to pierce into the deeper mysteries with the eye of the mind, and in (pursuing) the semblance of what is true, wander from the truth itself, have proved an occasion to the presumptuous and audacious for constructing and generating some heresy. This, however, is not to be wondered at, when, even in the instance of the canonical writings themselves, where all things have been expressed in the soundest manner, we see how it has happened,—not indeed through merely taking certain passages in a sense different from that which the writer had in view or which is consistent with the truth itself, (for if this were all, who would not gladly pardon human infirmity, when it exhibits a readiness to accept correction?), but by persistently defending, with the bitterest vehemence and in impudent arrogance, opinions which they have taken up in perversity and error,—many have given birth to many pernicious dogmas at the cost of rending the unity of the (Christian) communion. All these subjects we should discuss in modest

conference with the individual who makes his approach to the society of the Christian people, not in the character of an uneducated man, as they say, but in that of one who has passed through a finished culture and training in the books of the learned. And in enjoining him to guard against the errors of presumption, we should assume only so much authority as that humility of his, which induced him to come to us, is now felt to admit of. As to other things, moreover, in accordance with the rules of saving doctrine, which require to be narrated or discussed, whether they be matters relating to the faith, or questions bearing on the moral life, or others dealing with temptations, all these should be gone through in the manner which I have indicated, and ought therein to be referred to the more excellent way (already noticed).

## CHAPTER 9

### OF THE METHOD IN WHICH GRAMMARIANS AND PROFESSIONAL SPEAKERS ARE TO BE DEALT WITH

13. There are also some who come from the commonest schools of the grammarians and professional speakers, whom you may not venture to reckon either among the uneducated or among those very learned classes whose minds have been exercised in questions of real magnitude. When such persons, therefore, who appear to be superior to the rest of mankind, so far as the art of speaking is concerned, approach you with the view of becoming Christians, it will be your duty in your communications with them, in a higher degree than in your dealings with those other illiterate hearers, to make it plain that they are to be diligently admonished to clothe themselves with Christian humility, and learn not to despise individuals whom they may discover keeping themselves free from vices of conduct more carefully than from faults of language; and also that they ought not to presume so much as to compare with a pure heart the practised tongue which they were accustomed even to put in preference. But above all, such persons should be taught to listen to the divine Scriptures, so that they may neither deem solid eloquence to be mean, merely because it is not inflated, nor suppose that the words or deeds of men, of which we read the accounts in those books, involved and covered as they are in carnal wrappings, are not to be drawn forth and unfolded with a view to an (adequate)

understanding of them, but are to be taken merely according to the sound of the letter. And as to this same matter of the utility of the hidden meaning, the existence of which is the reason why they are called also mysteries, the power wielded by these intricacies of enigmatical utterances in the way of sharpening our love for the truth, and shaking off the torpor of weariness, is a thing which the persons in question must have made good to them by actual experience, when some subject which failed to move them when it was placed baldly before them, has its significance elicited by the detailed working out of an allegorical sense. For it is in the highest degree useful to such men to come to know how ideas are to be preferred to words, just as the soul is preferred to the body. And from this, too, it follows that they ought to have the desire to listen to discourses remarkable for their truth, rather than to those which are notable for their eloquence; just as they ought to be anxious to have friends distinguished for their wisdom, rather than those whose chief merit is their beauty. They should also understand that there is no voice for the ears of God save the affection of the soul. For thus they will not act the mocker if they happen to observe any of the prelates and ministers of the Church either calling upon God in language marked by barbarisms and solecisms, or failing in understanding correctly the very words which they are pronouncing, and making confused pauses. It is not meant, of course, that such faults are not to be corrected, so that the people may say “Amen” to something which they plainly understand; but what is intended is, that such things should be piously borne with by those who have come to understand how, as in the forum it is in the sound, so in the church it is in the desire that the grace of speech resides. Therefore that of the forum may sometimes be called good speech, but never gracious speech. Moreover, with respect to the sacrament which they are about to receive, it is enough for the more intelligent simply to hear what the thing signifies. But with those of slower intellect, it will be necessary to adopt a somewhat more detailed explanation, together with the use of similitudes, to prevent them from despising what they see.

## CHAPTER 10

OF THE ATTAINMENT OF CHEERFULNESS IN THE DUTY OF CATECHISING, AND OF  
VARIOUS CAUSES PRODUCING WEARINESS IN THE CATECHUMEN

14. At this point you perhaps desiderate some example of the kind of discourse intended, so that I may show you by an actual instance how the things which I have recommended are to be done. This indeed I shall do, so far as by God's help I shall be able. But before proceeding to that, it is my duty, in consistency with what I have promised, to speak of the acquisition of the cheerfulness (to which I have alluded). For as regards the matter of the rules in accordance with which your discourse should be set forth, in the case of the catechetical instruction of a person who comes with the express view of being made a Christian, I have already made good, as far as has appeared sufficient, the promise which I made. And surely I am under no obligation at the same time to do myself in this volume that which I enjoin as the right thing to be done. Consequently, if I do that, it will have the value of an overplus. But how can the overplus be super-added by me before I have filled up the measure of what is due? Besides, one thing which I have heard you make the subject of your complaint above all others, is the fact that your discourse seemed to yourself to be poor and spiritless when you were instructing any one in the Christian name. Now this, I know, results not so much from want of matter to say, with which I am well aware you are sufficiently provided and furnished, or from poverty of speech itself, as rather from weariness of mind. And that may spring either from the cause of which I have already spoken, namely, the fact that our intelligence is better pleased and more thoroughly arrested by that which we perceive in silence in the mind, and that we have no inclination to have our attention called off from it to a noise of words coming far short of representing it; or from the circumstance that even when discourse is pleasant, we have more delight in hearing or reading things which have been expressed in a superior manner, and which are set forth without any care or anxiety on our part, than in putting together, with a view to the comprehension of others, words suddenly conceived, and leaving it an uncertain issue, on the one hand, whether such terms occur to us as adequately represent the sense, and on the other, whether they be accepted in such a manner as to profit; or yet again, from the consideration that, in consequence of their being now thoroughly familiar to ourselves, and no longer necessary to our own advancement, it becomes irksome to us to be recurring very frequently to those matters which are urged upon the uninstructed, and our mind, as being by this time pretty well matured,

moves with no manner of pleasure in the circle of subjects so well-worn, and, as it were, so childish. A sense of weariness is also induced upon the speaker when he has a hearer who remains unmoved, either in that he is actually not stirred by any feeling, or in that he does not indicate by any motion of the body that he understands or that he is pleased with what is said. Not that it is a becoming disposition in us to be greedy of the praises of men, but that the things which we minister are of God; and the more we love those to whom we discourse, the more desirous are we that they should be pleased with the matters which are held forth for their salvation: so that if we do not succeed in this, we are pained, and we are weakened, and become broken-spirited in the midst of our course, as if we were wasting our efforts to no purpose. Sometimes, too, when we are drawn off from some matter which we are desirous to go on with, and the transaction of which was a pleasure to us, or appeared to be more than usually needful, and when we are compelled, either by the command of a person whom we are unwilling to offend, or by the importunity of some parties that we find it impossible to get rid of, to instruct any one catechetically, in such circumstances we approach a duty for which great calmness is indispensable with minds already perturbed, and grieving at once that we are not permitted to keep that order which we desire to observe in our actions, and that we cannot possibly be competent for all things; and thus out of very heaviness our discourse as it advances is less of an attraction, because, starting from the arid soil of dejection, it goes on less flowingly. Sometimes, too, sadness has taken possession of our heart in consequence of some offense or other, and at that very time we are addressed thus: "Come, speak with this person; he desires to become a Christian." For they who thus address us do it in ignorance of the hidden trouble which is consuming us within. So it happens that, if they are not the persons to whom it befits us to open up our feelings, we undertake with no sense of pleasure what they desire; and then, certainly, the discourse will be languid and unenjoyable which is transmitted through the agitated and fuming channel of a heart in that condition. Consequently, seeing there are so many causes serving to cloud the calm serenity of our minds, in accordance with God's will we must seek remedies for them, such as may bring us relief from these feelings of heaviness, and help us to rejoice in fervor of spirit,

and to be jocund in the tranquility of a good work. “For God loveth a cheerful giver.”

15. Now if the cause of our sadness lies in the circumstance that our hearer does not apprehend what we mean, so that we have to come down in a certain fashion from the elevation of our own conceptions, and are under the necessity of dwelling long in the tedious processes of syllables which come far beneath the standard of our ideas, and have anxiously to consider how that which we ourselves take in with a most rapid draught of mental apprehension is to be given forth by the mouth of flesh in the long and perplexed intricacies of its method of enunciation; and if the great dissimilarity thus felt (between our utterance and our thought) makes it distasteful to us to speak, and a pleasure to us to keep silence, then let us ponder what has been set before us by Him who has “showed us an example that we should follow His steps.” For however much our articulate speech may differ from the vivacity of our intelligence, much greater is the difference of the flesh of mortality from the equality of God. And, nevertheless, “although He was in the same form, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant,”—and so on down to the words “the death of the cross.” What is the explanation of this but that He made Himself “weak to the weak, in order that He might gain the weak?” Listen to His follower as he expresses himself also in another place to this effect: “For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that He died for all.” And how, indeed, should one be ready to be spent for their souls, if he should find it irksome to him to bend himself to their ears? For this reason, therefore, He became a little child in the midst of us, (and) like a nurse cherishing her children. For is it a pleasure to lisp shortened and broken words, unless love invites us? And yet men desire to have infants to whom they have to do that kind of service; and it is a sweeter thing to a mother to put small morsels of masticated food into her little son’s mouth, than to eat up and devour larger pieces herself. In like manner, accordingly, let not the thought of the hen recede from your heart, who covers her tender brood with her drooping feathers, and with broken voice calls her chirping young ones to her, while they that turn away from her fostering wings in their pride become a prey to birds. For if intelligence brings delights in its



purest recesses, it should also be a delight to us to have an intelligent understanding of the manner in which charity, the more complaisantly it descends to the lowest objects, finds its way back, with all the greater vigor to those that are most secret, along the course of a good conscience which witnesses that it has sought nothing from those to whom it has descended except their everlasting salvation.

## CHAPTER 11

### OF THE REMEDY FOR THE SECOND SOURCE OF WEARINESS

16. If, however, it is rather our desire to read or hear such things as are already prepared for our use and expressed in a superior style, and if the consequence is that we feel it irksome to put together, at the time and with an uncertain issue, the terms of discourse on our own side, then, provided only that our mind does not wander off from the truth of the facts themselves, it is an easy matter for the hearer, if he is offended by anything in our language, to come to see in that very circumstance how little value should be set, supposing the subject itself to be rightly understood, upon the mere fact that there may have been some imperfection or some inaccuracy in the literal expressions, which were employed indeed simply with the view of securing a correct apprehension of the subject-matter. But if the bent of human infirmity has wandered off from the truth of the facts themselves,—although in the catechetical instruction of the unlearned, where we have to keep by the most beaten track, that cannot occur very readily,—still, lest haply it should turn out that our hearer finds cause of offence even in this direction, we ought not to deem this to have come upon us in any other way than as the issue of God's own wish to put us to the test with respect to our readiness to receive correction in calmness of mind, so as not to rush headlong, in the course of a still greater error, into the defense of our error. But if, again, no one has told us of it, and if the thing has altogether escaped our own notice, as well as the observation of our hearers, then there is nothing to grieve over, provided only the same thing does not occur a second time. For the most part, however, when we recall what we have said, we ourselves discover something to find fault with, and are ignorant of the manner in which it was received when it was uttered; and so when charity is fervent within us, we are the more vexed if the thing, while

really false, has been received with unquestioning acceptance. This being the case, then, whenever an opportunity occurs, as we have been finding fault with ourselves in silence, we ought in like manner to see to it that those persons be also set right on the subject in a considerate method, who have fallen into some sort of error, not by the words of God, but plainly by those used by us. If, on the other hand, there are any who, blinded by insensate spite, rejoice that we have committed a mistake, whisperers as they are, and slanderers, and “hateful to God,” such characters should afford us matter for the exercise of patience with pity, inasmuch as also the “patience of God leadeth them to repentance.” For what is more detestable, and what more likely to “treasure up wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” than to rejoice, after the evil likeness and pattern of the devil, in the evil of another? At times, too, even when all is correctly and truly spoken, either something which has not been understood, or something which, as being opposed to the idea and wont of an old error, seems harsh in its very novelty, offends and disturbs the hearer. But if this becomes apparent, and if the person shows himself capable of being set right, he should be set right without any delay by the use of abundance of authorities and reasons. On the other hand, if the offense is tacit and hidden, the medicine of God is the effective remedy for it. And if, again, the person starts back and declines to be cured, we should comfort ourselves with that example of our Lord, who, when men were offended at His word, and shrank from it as a hard saying, addressed Himself at the same time to those who had remained, in these terms, “Will ye also go away?” For it ought to be retained as a thoroughly “fixed and immovable” position in our heart, that Jerusalem which is in captivity is set free from the Babylon of this world when the times have run their course, and that none belonging to her shall perish: for whoever may perish was not of her. “For the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His; and, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” If we ponder these things, and call upon the Lord to come into our heart, we shall be less apprehensive of the uncertain issues of our discourse, consequent on the uncertain feelings of our hearers; and the very endurance of vexations in the cause of a work of mercy will also be something pleasant to us, if we seek not our own glory in the same. For then is a work truly good, when the aim of the doer gets its impetus from charity,

and, as if returning to its own place, rests again in charity. Moreover, the reading which delights us, or any listening to an eloquence superior to our own, the effect of which is to make us inclined to set a greater value upon it than upon the discourse which we ourselves have to deliver, and so to lead us to speak with a reluctant or tedious utterance, will come upon us in a happier spirit, and will be found to be more enjoyable after labor. Then, too, with a stronger confidence shall we pray to God to speak to us as we wish, if we cheerfully submit to let Him speak by us as we are able. Thus is it brought about that all things come together for good to them that love God.

## CHAPTER 12

### OF THE REMEDY FOR THE THIRD SOURCE OF WEARINESS

17. Once more, however, we often feel it very wearisome to go over repeatedly matters which are thoroughly familiar, and adapted (rather) to children. If this is the case with us, then we should endeavor to meet them with a brother's, a father's, and a mother's love; and, if we are once united with them thus in heart, to us no less than to them will these things seem new. For so great is the power of a sympathetic disposition of mind, that, as they are affected while we are speaking, and we are affected while they are learning, we have our dwelling in each other; and thus, at one and the same time, they as it were in us speak what they hear, and we in them learn after a certain fashion what we teach. Is it not a common occurrence with us, that when we show to persons, who have never seen them, certain spacious and beautiful tracts, either in cities or in fields, which we have been in the habit of passing by without any sense of pleasure, simply because we have become so accustomed to the sight of them, we find our own enjoyment renewed in their enjoyment of the novelty of the scene? And this is so much the more our experience in proportion to the intimacy of our friendship with them; because, just as we are in them in virtue of the bond of love, in the same degree do things become new to us which previously were old. But if we ourselves have made any considerable progress in the contemplative study of things, it is not our wish that those whom we love should simply be gratified and astonished as they gaze upon the works of men's hands; but it becomes our wish to lift them to (the contemplation of) the very skill or wisdom of their author, and from this to (see them) rise to the admiration

and praise of the all-creating God, with whom is the most fruitful end of love. How much more, then, ought we to be delighted when men come to us with the purpose already formed of obtaining the knowledge of God Himself, with a view to (the knowledge of) whom all things should be learned which are to be learned! And how ought we to feel ourselves renewed in their newness (of experience), so that if our ordinary preaching is somewhat frigid, it may rise to fresh warmth under (the stimulus of) their extraordinary hearing! There is also this additional consideration to help us in the attainment of gladness, namely, that we ponder and bear in mind out of what death of error the man is passing over into the life of faith. And if we walk through streets which are most familiar to us, with a beneficent cheerfulness, when we happen to be pointing out the way to some individual who had been in distress in consequence of missing his direction, how much more should be the alacrity of spirit, and how much greater the joy with which, in the matter of saving doctrine, we ought to traverse again and again even those tracks which, so far as we are ourselves concerned, there is no need to open up any more; seeing that we are leading a miserable soul, and one worn out with the devious courses of this world, through the paths of peace, at the command of Him who made that peace good to us!

## CHAPTER 13

### OF THE REMEDY FOR THE FOURTH SOURCE OF WEARINESS

18. But in good truth it is a serious demand to make upon us, to continue discoursing on to the set limit when we fail to see our hearer in any degree moved; whether it be that, under the restraints of the awe of religion, he has not the boldness to signify his approval by voice or by any movement of his body, or that he is kept back by the modesty proper to man, or that he does not understand our sayings, or that he counts them of no value. Since, then, this must be a matter of uncertainty to us, as we cannot discern his mind, it becomes our duty in our discourse to make trial of all things which may be of any avail in stirring him up and drawing him forth as it were from his place of concealment. For that sort of fear which is excessive, and which obstructs the declaration of his judgment, ought to be dispelled by the force of kindly exhortation; and by bringing before him the consideration of our brotherly affinity, we should temper his reverence for us; and by

questioning him, we should ascertain whether he understands what is addressed to him; and we should impart to him a sense of confidence, so that he may give free expression to any objection which suggests itself to him. We should at the same time ask him whether he has already listened to such themes on some previous occasion, and whether perchance they fail to move him now in consequence of their being to him like things well known and commonplace. And we ought to shape our course in accordance with his answer, so as either to speak in a simpler style and with greater detail of explanation, or to refute some antagonistic opinion, or, instead of attempting any more diffuse exposition of the subjects which are known to him, to give a brief summary of these, and to select some of those matters which are handled in a mystical manner in the holy books, and especially in the historical narrative, the unfolding and setting forth of which may make our addresses more attractive. But if the man is of a very sluggish disposition, and if he is senseless, and without anything in common with all such sources of pleasure, then we must simply bear with him in a compassionate spirit; and, after briefly going over other points, we ought to impress upon him, in a manner calculated to inspire him with awe, the truths which are most indispensable on the subject of the unity of the Catholic Church, on that of temptation, on that of a Christian conversation in view of the future judgment; and we ought rather to address ourselves to God for him than address much to him concerning God.

19. It is likewise a frequent occurrence that one who at first listened to us with all readiness, becomes exhausted either by the effort of hearing or by standing, and now no longer commends what is said, but gapes and yawns, and even unwillingly exhibits a disposition to depart. When we observe that, it becomes our duty to refresh his mind by saying something seasoned with an honest cheerfulness and adapted to the matter which is being discussed, or something of a very wonderful and amazing order, or even, it may be, something of a painful and mournful nature. Whatever we thus say may be all the better if it affects himself more immediately, so that the quick sense of self-concern may keep his attention on the alert. At the same time, however, it should not be of the kind to offend his spirit of reverence by any harshness attaching to it; but it should be of a nature fitted rather to conciliate him by the friendliness which it breathes. Or else, we should

relieve him by accommodating him with a seat, although unquestionably matters will be better ordered if from the outset, whenever that can be done with propriety, he sits and listens. And indeed in certain of the churches beyond the sea, with a far more considerate regard to the fitness of things, not only do the prelates sit when they address the people, but they also themselves put down seats for the people, lest any person of enfeebled strength should become exhausted by standing, and thus have his mind diverted from the most wholesome purport (of the discourse), or even be under the necessity of departing. And yet it is one thing if it be simply some one out of a great multitude who withdraws in order to recruit his strength, he being also already under the obligations which result from participation in the sacraments; and it is quite another thing if the person withdrawing is one (inasmuch as it is usually the case in these circumstances that the man is unavoidably urged to that course by the fear that he should even fall, overcome by internal weakness) who has to be initiated in the first sacraments; for a person in this position is at once restrained by the sense of shame from stating the reason of his going, and not permitted to stand through the force of his weakness. This I speak from experience. For this was the case with a certain individual, a man from the country, when I was instructing him catechetically: and from his instance I have learned that this kind of thing is carefully to be guarded against. For who can endure our arrogance when we fail to make men who are our brethren, or even those who are not yet in that relation to us (for our solicitude then should be all the greater to get them to become our brethren), to be seated in our presence, seeing that even a woman sat as she listened to our Lord Himself, in whose service the angels stand alert? Of course if the address is to be but short, or if the place is not well adapted for sitting, they should listen standing. But that should be the case only when there are many hearers, and when they are not to be formally admitted at the time. For when the audience consists only of one or two, or a few, who have come with the express purpose of being made Christians, there is a risk in speaking to them standing. Nevertheless, supposing that we have once begun in that manner, we ought at least, whenever we observe signs of weariness on the part of the hearer, to offer him the liberty of being seated; nay more, we should urge him by all means to sit down, and we ought to drop some remark calculated at once to refresh him and to banish from his mind any

anxiety which may have chanced to break in upon him and draw off his attention. For inasmuch as the reasons why he remains silent and declines to listen cannot be certainly known to us, now that he is seated we may speak to some extent against the incidence of thoughts about worldly affairs, delivering ourselves either in the cheerful spirit to which I have already adverted, or in a serious vein; so that, if these are the particular anxieties which have occupied his mind, they may be made to give way as if indicted by name: while, on the other hand, supposing them not to be the special causes (of the loss of interest), and supposing him to be simply worn out with listening, his attention will be relieved of the pressure of weariness when we address to him some unexpected and extraordinary strain of remark on these subjects, in the mode of which I have spoken, as if they were the particular anxieties,—for indeed we are simply ignorant (of the true causes). But let the remark thus made be short, especially considering that it is thrown in out of order, lest the very medicine even increase the malady of weariness which we desire to relieve; and, at the same time, we should go on rapidly with what remains, and promise and present the prospect of a conclusion nearer than was looked for.

#### CHAPTER 14

##### OF THE REMEDY AGAINST THE FIFTH AND SIXTH SOURCES OF WEARINESS

20. If, again, your spirit has been broken by the necessity of giving up some other employment, on which, as the more requisite, you were now bent; and if the sadness caused by that constraint makes you catechise in no pleasant mood, you ought to ponder the fact that, excepting that we know it to be our duty, in all our dealings with men, to act in a merciful manner, and in the exercise of the sincerest charity,—with this one exception, I say, it is quite uncertain to us what is the more profitable thing for us to do, and what the more opportune thing for us either to pass by for a time or altogether to omit. For inasmuch as we know not how the merits of men, on whose behalf we are acting, stand with God, the question as to what is expedient for them at a certain time is something which, instead of being able to comprehend, we can rather only surmise, without the aid of any (clear) inferences, or (at best) with the slenderest and the most uncertain. Therefore we ought certainly to dispose the matters with which we have to deal

according to our intelligence; and then, if we prove able to carry them out in the manner upon which we have resolved, we should rejoice, not indeed that it was our will, but that it was God's will, that they should thus be accomplished. But if anything unavoidable happens, by which the disposition thus proposed by us is interfered with, we should bend ourselves to it readily, lest we be broken; so that the very disposition of affairs which God has preferred to ours may also be made our own. For it is more in accordance with propriety that we should follow His will than that He should follow ours. Besides, as regards this order in the doing of things, which we wish to keep in accordance with our own judgment, surely that course is to be approved of in which objects that are superior have the precedence. Why then are we aggrieved that the precedence over men should be held by the Lord God in His vast superiority to us men, so that in the said love which we entertain for our own order, we should thus (exhibit the disposition to) despise order? For "no one orders for the better" what he has to do, except the man who is rather ready to leave undone what he is prohibited from doing by the divine power, than desirous of doing that which he meditates in his own human cogitations. For "there are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord stands for ever."

21. But if our mind is agitated by some cause of offense, so as not to be capable of delivering a discourse of a calm and enjoyable strain, our charity towards those for whom Christ died, desiring to redeem them by the price of His own blood from the death of the errors of this world, ought to be so great, that the very circumstance of intelligence being brought us in our sadness, regarding the advent of some person who longs to become a Christian, ought to be enough to cheer us and dissipate that heaviness of spirit, just as the delights of gain are wont to soften the pain of losses. For we are not (fairly) oppressed by the offense of any individual, unless it be that of the man whom we either perceive or believe to be perishing himself, or to be the occasion of the undoing of some weak one. Accordingly, one who comes to us with the view of being formally admitted, in that we cherish the hope of his ability to go forward, should wipe away the sorrow caused by one who fails us. For even if the dread that our proselyte may become the child of hell comes into our thoughts, as, there are many such



before our eyes, from whom those offenses arise by which we are distressed, this ought to operate, not in the way of keeping us back, but rather in the way of stimulating us and spurring us on. And in the same measure we ought to admonish him whom we are instructing to be on his guard against imitating those who are Christians only in name and not in very truth, and to take care not to suffer himself to be so moved by their numbers as either to be desirous of following them, or to be reluctant to follow Christ on their account, and either to be unwilling to be in the Church of God, where they are, or to wish to be there in such a character as they bear. And somehow or other, in admonitions of this sort, that address is the more glowing to which a present sense of grief supplies the fuel; so that instead of being duller, we utter with greater fire and vehemence under such feelings things which, in times of greater ease, we would give forth in a colder and less energetic manner. And this should make us rejoice that an opportunity is afforded us under which the emotions of our mind pass not away without yielding some fruit.

22. If, however, grief has taken possession of us on account of something in which we ourselves have erred or sinned, we should bear in mind not only that a “broken spirit is a sacrifice to God,” but also the saying, “Like as water quencheth fire, so alms sin;” and again, “I will have mercy,” saith He, “rather than sacrifice.” Therefore, as in the event of our being in peril from fire we would certainly run to the water in order to get the fire extinguished, and we would be grateful if any person were to offer it in the immediate vicinity; so, if some flame of sin has risen from our own stack, and if we are troubled on that account, when an opportunity has been given for a most merciful work, we should rejoice in it, as if a fountain were offered us in order that by it the conflagration which had burst forth might be extinguished. Unless haply we are foolish enough to think that we ought to be readier in running with bread, wherewith we may fill the belly of a hungry man, than with the word of God, wherewith we may instruct the mind of the man who feeds on it. There is this also to consider, namely, that if it would only be of advantage to us to do this thing, and entail no disadvantage to leave it undone, we might despise a remedy offered in an unhappy fashion in the time of peril with a view to the safety, not now of a neighbor, but of ourselves. But when from the mouth of the Lord this so

threatening sentence is heard, “Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou oughtest to give my money to the exchangers,” what madness, I pray thee, is it thus, seeing that our sin pains us, to be minded to sin again, by refusing to give the Lord’s money to one who desires it and asks it! When these and such like considerations and reflections have succeeded in dispelling the darkness of weary feelings, the bent of mind is rendered apt for the duty of catechising, so that that is received in a pleasant manner which breaks forth vigorously and cheerfully from the rich vein of charity. For these things indeed which are uttered here are spoken, not so much by me to you, as rather to us all by that very “love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit that is given to us.”

## CHAPTER 15

### OF THE METHOD IN WHICH OUR ADDRESS SHOULD BE ADAPTED TO DIFFERENT CLASSES OF HEARERS

23. But now, perhaps, you also demand of me as a debt that which, previous to the promise which I made, I was under no obligation to give, namely, that I should not count it burdensome to unfold some sort of example of the discourse intended, and to set it before you for your study, just as if I were myself engaged in catechising some individual. Before I do that, however, I wish you to keep in mind the fact that the mental effort is of one kind in the case of a person who dictates, with a future reader in his view, and that it is of quite another kind in the case of a person who speaks with a present hearer to whom to direct his attention. And further, it is to be remembered that, in this latter instance in particular, the effort is of one kind when one is admonishing in private, and when there is no other person at hand to pronounce judgment on us; whereas it is of a different order when one is conveying any instruction in public, and when there stands around him an audience of persons holding dissimilar opinions; and again, that in this exercise of teaching, the effort will be of one sort when only a single individual is being instructed, while all the rest listen, like persons judging or attesting things well known to them, and that it will be different when all those who are present wait for what we have to deliver to them; and once more, that, in this same instance, the effort will be one thing when all are seated, as it were, in private conference with a view to engaging in some

discussion, and that it will be quite another thing when the people sit silent and intent on giving their attention to some single speaker who is to address them from a higher position. It will likewise make a considerable difference, even when we are discoursing in that style, whether there are few present or many, whether they are learned or unlearned, or made up of both classes combined; whether they are city-bred or rustics, or both the one and the other together; or whether, again, they are a people composed of all orders of men in due proportion. For it is impossible but that they will affect in different ways the person who has to speak to them and discourse with them, and that the address which is delivered will both bear certain features, as it were, expressive of the feelings of the mind from which it proceeds, and also influence the hearers in different ways, in accordance with that same difference (in the speaker's disposition), while at the same time the hearers themselves will influence one another in different ways by the simple force of their presence with each other. But as we are dealing at present with the matter of the instruction of the unlearned, I am a witness to you, as regards my own experience, that I find myself variously moved, according as I see before me, for the purposes of catechetical instruction, a highly educated man, a dull fellow, a citizen, a foreigner, a rich man, a poor man, a private individual, a man of honors, a person occupying some position of authority, an individual of this or the other nation, of this or the other age or sex, one proceeding from this or the other sect, from this or the other common error,—and ever in accordance with the difference of my feelings does my discourse itself at once set out, go on, and reach its end. And inasmuch as, although the same charity is due to all, yet the same medicine is not to be administered to all, in like manner charity itself travails with some, is made weak together with others; is at pains to edify some, tremblingly apprehends being an offense to others; bends to some, lifts itself erect to others; is gentle to some, severe to others; to none an enemy, to all a mother. And when one, who has not gone through the kind of experience to which I refer in the same spirit of charity, sees us attaining, in virtue of some gift which has been conferred upon us, and which carries the power of pleasing, a certain repute of an eulogistic nature in the mouth of the multitude, he counts us happy on that account. But may God, into whose cognizance the “groaning of them that are bound enters,” look upon our humility, and our labor, and forgive us all our sins. Wherefore, if

anything in us has so far pleased you as to make you desirous of hearing from us some remarks on the subject of the form of discourse which you ought to follow, you should acquire a more thorough understanding of the matter by contemplating us, and listening to us when we are actually engaged with these topics, than by a perusal when we are only dictating them.

## CHAPTER 16

### A SPECIMEN OF A CATECHETICAL ADDRESS; AND FIRST, THE CASE OF A CATECHUMEN WITH WORTHY VIEWS

24. Nevertheless, however that may be, let us here suppose that some one has come to us who desires to be made a Christian, and who belongs indeed to the order of private persons, and yet not to the class of rustics, but to that of the city-bred, such as those whom you cannot fail to come across in numbers in Carthage. Let us also suppose that, on being asked whether the inducement leading him to desire to be a Christian is any advantage looked for in the present life, or the rest which is hoped for after this life, he has answered that his inducement has been the rest that is yet to come. Then perchance such a person might be instructed by us in some such strain of address as the following: “Thanks be to God, my brother; cordially do I wish you joy, and I am glad on your account that, amid all the storms of this world, which are at once so great and so dangerous, you have bethought yourself of some true and certain security. For even in this life men go in quest of rest and security at the cost of heavy labors, but they fail to find such in consequence of their wicked lusts. For their thought is to find rest in things which are unquiet, and which endure not. And these objects, inasmuch as they are withdrawn from them and pass away in the course of time, agitate them by fears and griefs, and suffer them not to enjoy tranquillity. For if it be that a man seeks to find his rest in wealth, he is rendered proud rather than at ease. Do we not see how many have lost their riches on a sudden,—how many, too, have been undone by reason of them, either as they have been coveting to possess them, or as they have been borne down and despoiled of them by others more covetous than themselves? And even should they remain with the man all his life long, and never leave their lover, yet would he himself (have to) leave them at his

death. For of what measure is the life of man, even if he lives to old age? Or when men desire for themselves old age, what else do they really desire but long infirmity? So, too, with the honors of this world,—what are they but empty pride and vanity, and peril of ruin? For holy Scripture speaks in this wise: All flesh is grass, and the glory of man is as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.’ Consequently, if any man longs for true rest and true felicity, he ought to lift his hope off things which are mortal and transitory, and fix it on the word of the Lord; so that, cleaving to that which endures for ever, he may himself together with it endure for ever.

25. “There are also other men who neither crave to be rich nor go about seeking the vain pomps of honors, but who nevertheless are minded to find their pleasure and rest in dainty meats, and in fornications, and in those theatres and spectacles which are at their disposal in great cities for nothing. But it fares with these, too, in the same way; or they waste their small means in luxury, and subsequently, under pressure of want, break out into thefts and burglaries, and at times even into highway robberies, and so they are suddenly filled with fears both numerous and great; and men who a little before were singing in the house of revelry, are now dreaming of the sorrows of the prison. Moreover, in their eager devotion to the public spectacles, they come to resemble demons, as they incite men by their cries to wound each other, and instigate those who have done them no hurt to engage in furious contests with each other, while they seek to please an insane people. And if they perceive any such to be peaceably disposed, they straightway hate them and persecute them, and raise an outcry, asking that they should be beaten with clubs, as if they had been in collusion to cheat them; and this iniquity they force even the judge, who is the (appointed) avenger of iniquities, to perpetrate. On the other hand, if they observe such men exerting themselves in horrid hostilities against each other, whether they be those who are called sintoe, or theatrical actors and players, or charioteers, or hunters,—those wretched men whom they engage in conflicts and struggles, not only men with men, but even men with beasts,—then the fiercer the fury with which they perceive these unhappy creatures rage against each other, the better they like them, and the greater the enjoyment they have in them; and they favor them when thus excited,

and by so favoring them they excite them all the more, the spectators themselves striving more madly with each other, as they espouse the cause of different combatants, than is the case even with those very men whose madness they madly provoke, while at the same time they also long to be spectators of the same in their mad frenzy. How then can that mind keep the soundness of peace which feeds on strifes and contentions? For just as is the food which is received, such is the health which results. In fine, although mad pleasures are no pleasures, nevertheless let these things be taken as they are, and it still remains the case that, whatever their nature may be, and whatever the measure of enjoyment yielded by the boasts of riches, and the inflation of honors, and the spendthrift pleasures of the taverns, and the contests of the theatres, and the impurity of fornications, and the pruriency of the baths, they are all things of which one little fever deprives us, while, even from those who still survive, it takes away the whole false happiness of their life. Then there remains only a void and wounded conscience, destined to apprehend that God as a Judge whom it refused to have as a Father, and destined also to find a severe Lord in Him whom it scorned to seek and love as a tender Father. But thou, inasmuch as thou seekest that true rest which is promised to Christians after this life, wilt taste the same sweet and pleasant rest even here among the bitterest troubles of this life, if thou continuest to love the commandments of Him who hath promised the same. For quickly wilt thou feel that the fruits of righteousness are sweeter than those of unrighteousness, and that a man finds a more genuine and pleasurable joy in the possession of a good conscience in the midst of troubles than in that of an evil conscience in the midst of delights. For thou hast not come to be united to the Church of God with the idea of seeking from it any temporal advantage.

## CHAPTER 17

THE SPECIMEN OF CATECHETICAL DISCOURSE CONTINUED, IN REFERENCE  
SPECIALLY TO THE REPROVAL OF FALSE AIMS ON THE CATECHUMEN'S PART

26. "For there are some whose reason for desiring to become Christians is either that they may gain the favor of men from whom they look for temporal advantages, or that they are reluctant to offend those whom they fear. But these are reprobate; and although the church bears them for a time,

as the threshing-floor bears the chaff until the period of winnowing, yet if they fail to amend and begin to be Christians in sincerity in view of the everlasting rest which is to come, they will be separated from it in the end. And let not such flatter themselves, because it is possible for them to be in the threshing-floor along with the grain of God. For they will not be together with that in the barn, but are destined for the fire, which is their due. There are also others of better hope indeed, but nevertheless in no inferior danger. I mean those who now fear God, and mock not the Christian name, neither enter the church of God with an assumed heart, but still look for their felicity in this life, expecting to have more felicity in earthly things than those enjoy who refuse to worship God. And the consequence of this false anticipation is, that when they see some wicked and impious men strongly established and excelling in this worldly prosperity, while they themselves either possess it in a smaller degree or miss it altogether, they are troubled with the thought that they are serving God without reason, and so they readily fall away from the faith.

27. “But as to the man who has in view that everlasting blessedness and perpetual rest which is promised as the lot destined for the saints after this life, and who desires to become a Christian, in order that he may not pass into eternal fire with the devil, but enter into the eternal kingdom together with Christ, such an one is truly a Christian; (and he will be) on his guard in every temptation, so that he may neither be corrupted by prosperity nor be utterly broken in spirit by adversity, but remain at once modest and temperate when the good things of earth abound with him, and brave and patient when tribulations overtake him. A person of this character will also advance in attainments until he comes to that disposition of mind which will make him love God more than he fears hell; so that even were God to say to him, Avail yourself of carnal pleasures for ever, and sin as much as you are able, and you shall neither die nor be sent into hell, but you will only not be with me, he would be terribly dismayed, and would altogether abstain from sinning, not now (simply) with the purpose of not falling into that of which he was wont to be afraid, but with the wish not to offend Him whom he so greatly loves: in whom alone also there is the rest which eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of

man (to conceive),—the rest which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

28. “Now, on the subject of this rest Scripture is significant, and refrains not to speak, when it tells us how at the beginning of the world, and at the time when God made heaven and earth and all things which are in them, He worked during six days, and rested on the seventh day. For it was in the power of the Almighty to make all things even in one moment of time. For He had not labored in the view that He might enjoy (a needful) rest, since indeed “He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created;” but that He might signify how, after six ages of this world, in a seventh age, as on the seventh day, He will rest in His saints; inasmuch as these same saints shall rest also in Him after all the good works in which they have served Him,—which He Himself, indeed, works in them, who calls them, and instructs them, and puts away the offenses that are past, and justifies the man who previously was ungodly. For as, when by His gift they work that which is good, He is Himself rightly said to work (that in them), so, when they rest in Him, He is rightly said to rest Himself. For, as regards Himself, He seeks no cessation, because He feels no labor. Moreover He made all things by His Word; and His Word is Christ Himself, in whom the angels and all those purest spirits of heaven rest in holy silence. Man, however in that he fell by sin, has lost the rest which he possessed in His divinity, and receives it again (now) in His humanity; and for this purpose He became man, and was born of a woman, at the seasonable time at which He Himself knew it behoved it so to be fulfilled. And from the flesh assuredly He could not sustain any contamination, being Himself rather destined to purify the flesh. Of His future coming the ancient saints, in the revelation of the Spirit, had knowledge, and prophesied. And thus were they saved by believing that He was to come, even as we are saved by believing that He has come. Hence ought we to love God who has so loved us as to have sent His only Son, in order that He might endue Himself with the lowliness of our mortality, and die both at the hands of sinners and on behalf of sinners. For even in times of old, and in the opening ages, the depth of this mystery ceases not to be prefigured and prophetically announced.



## CHAPTER 18

### OF WHAT IS TO BE BELIEVED ON THE SUBJECT OF THE CREATION OF MAN AND OTHER OBJECTS

29. “Whereas, then, the omnipotent God, who is also good and just and merciful, who made all things,—whether they be great or small, whether they be highest or lowest, whether they be things which are seen, such as are the heavens and the earth and the sea, and in the heavens, in particular, the sun and the moon and other luminaries, and in the earth and the sea, again, trees and shrubs and animals each after their kind, and all bodies celestial or terrestrial alike, or whether they be things which are not seen, such as are those spirits whereby bodies are animated and endowed with life,—made also man after His own image, in order that, as He Himself, in virtue of His omnipotence, presides over universal creation, so man, in virtue of that intelligence of his by which he comes to know even his Creator and worships Him, might preside over all the living creatures of earth: Whereas, too, he made the woman to be an helpmeet for him: not for carnal concupiscence,—since, indeed, they had not corruptible bodies at that period, before the punishment of sin invaded them in the form of mortality,—but for this purpose, that the man might at once have glory of the woman in so far as he went before her to God, and present in himself an example to her for imitation in holiness and piety, even as he himself was to be the glory of God in so far as he followed his wisdom:

30. “Therefore did he place them in a certain locality of perpetual blessedness, which the Scripture designates Paradise: and he gave them a commandment, on condition of not violating which they were to continue for ever in that blessedness of immortality; while, on the other hand, if they transgressed it, they were to sustain the penalties of mortality. Now God knew beforehand that they would transgress it. Nevertheless, in that He is the author and maker of everything good, He chose rather to make them, as He also made the beasts, in order that He might replenish the earth with the good things proper to earth. And certainly man, even sinful man, is better than a beast. And the commandment, which they were not to keep, He yet preferred to give them, in order that they might be without excuse when He should begin to vindicate Himself against them. For whatever man may

have done, he finds God worthy to be praised in all His doings: if he shall have acted rightly, he finds Him worthy to be praised for the righteousness of His rewards: if he shall have sinned, he finds Him worthy to be praised for the righteousness of His punishments: if he shall have confessed his sins and returned to an upright life, he finds Him worthy to be praised for the mercy of His pardoning favors. Why, then, should God not make man, although He foreknew that he would sin, when He might crown him if he stood, and set him right if he fell, and help him if he rose, Himself being always and everywhere glorious in goodness, righteousness, and clemency? Above all, why should He not do so, since He also foreknew this, namely, that from the race of that mortality there would spring saints, who should not seek their own, but give glory to their Creator; and who, obtaining deliverance from every corruption by worshipping Him, should be counted worthy to live for ever, and to live in blessedness with the holy angels? For He who gave freedom of will to men, in order that they might worship God not of slavish necessity but with ingenuous inclination, gave it also to the angels; and hence neither did the angel, who, in company with other spirits who were his satellites, forsook in pride the obedience of God and became the devil, do any hurt to God, but to himself. For God knoweth how to dispose of souls that leave Him, and out of their righteous misery to furnish the inferior sections of His creatures with the most appropriate and befitting laws of His wonderful dispensation. Consequently, neither did the devil in any manner harm God, whether in falling himself, or in seducing man to death; nor did man himself in any degree impair the truth, or power, or blessedness of His Maker, in that, when his partner was seduced by the devil, he of his own deliberate inclination consented unto her in the doing of that which God had forbidden. For by the most righteous laws of God all were condemned, God Himself being glorious in the equity of retribution, while they were shamed through the degradation of punishment: to the end that man, when he turned away from his Creator, should be overcome by the devil and made his subject, and that the devil might be set before man as an enemy to be conquered, when he turned again to his Creator; so that whosoever should consent unto the devil even to the end, might go with him into eternal punishments; whereas those who should humble themselves to God, and by His grace overcome the devil, might be counted worthy of eternal rewards.

## CHAPTER 19

### OF THE CO-EXISTENCE OF GOOD AND EVIL IN THE CHURCH, AND THEIR FINAL SEPARATION

31. “Neither ought we to be moved by the consideration that many consent unto the devil, and few follow God; for the grain, too, in comparison with the chaff, has greatly the defect in number. But even as the husbandman knows what to do with the mighty heap of chaff, so the multitude of sinners is nothing to God, who knows what to do with them, so as not to let the administration of His kingdom be disordered and dishonored in any part. Nor is the devil to be supposed to have proved victorious for the mere reason of his drawing away with him more than the few by whom he may be overcome. In this way there are two communities—one of the ungodly, and another of the holy—which are carried down from the beginning of the human race even to the end of the world, which are at present commingled in respect of bodies, but separated in respect of wills, and which, moreover, are destined to be separated also in respect of bodily presence in the day of judgment. For all men who love pride and temporal power with vain elation and pomp of arrogance, and all spirits who set their affections on such things and seek their own glory in the subjection of men, are bound fast together in one association; nay, even although they frequently fight against each other on account of these things, they are nevertheless precipitated by the like weight of lust into the same abyss, and are united with each other by similarity of manners and merits. And, again, all men and all spirits who humbly seek the glory of God and not their own, and who follow Him in piety, belong to one fellowship. And, notwithstanding this, God is most merciful and patient with ungodly men, and offers them a place for penitence and amendment.

32. “For with respect also to the fact that He destroyed all men in the flood, with the exception of one righteous man together with his house, whom He willed to be saved in the ark, He knew indeed that they would not amend themselves; yet, nevertheless, as the building of the ark went on for the space of a hundred years, the wrath of God which was to come upon them was certainly preached to them: and if they only would have turned to God, He would have spared them, as at a later period He spared the city of

Nineveh when it repented, after He had announced to it, by means of a prophet, the destruction that was about to overtake it. Thus, moreover, God acts, granting a space for repentance even to those who He knows will persist in wickedness, in order that He may exercise and instruct our patience by His own example; whereby also we may know how greatly it befits us to bear with the evil in long-suffering, when we know not what manner of men they will prove hereafter, seeing that He, whose cognizance nothing that is yet to be escapes, spares them and suffers them to live. Under the sacramental sign of the flood, however, in which the righteous were rescued by the wood, there was also a fore-announcement of the Church which was to be, which Christ, its King and God, has raised on high; by the mystery of His cross, in safety from the submersion of this world. Moreover, God was not ignorant of the fact that, even of those who had been saved in the ark, there would be born wicked men, who would cover the face of the earth a second time with iniquities. But, nevertheless, He both gave them a pattern of the future judgment, and fore-announced the deliverance of the holy by the mystery of the wood. For even after these things wickedness did not cease to sprout forth again through pride, and lusts, and illicit impieties, when men, forsaking their Creator, not only fell to the (standard of the) creature which God made, so as to worship instead of God that which God made, but even bowed their souls to the works of the hands of men and to the contrivances of craftsmen, wherein a more shameful triumph was to be won over them by the devil, and by those evil spirits who rejoice in finding themselves adored and revered in such false devices, while they feed their own errors with the errors of men.

33. “But in truth there were not wanting in those times righteous men also of the kind to seek God piously and to overcome the pride of the devil, citizens of that holy community, who were made whole by the humiliation of Christ, which was then only destined to enter, but was revealed to them by the Spirit. From among these, Abraham, a pious and faithful servant of God, was chosen, in order that to him might be shown the sacrament of the Son of God, so that thus, in virtue of the imitation of his faith, all the faithful of all nations might be called his children in the future. Of him was born a people, by whom the one true God who made heaven and earth should be worshipped when all other nations did service to idols and evil

spirits. In that people, plainly, the future Church was much more evidently prefigured. For in it there was a carnal multitude that worshipped God with a view to visible benefits. But in it there were also a few who thought of the future rest, and looked longingly for the heavenly fatherland, to whom through prophecy was revealed the coming humiliation of God in the person of our King and Lord Jesus Christ, in order that they might be made whole of all pride and arrogance through that faith. And with respect to these saints who in point of time had precedence of the birth of the Lord, not only their speech, but also their life, and their marriages, and their children, and their doings, constituted a prophecy of this time, at which the Church is being gathered together out of all nations through faith in the passion of Christ. By the instrumentality of those holy patriarchs and prophets this carnal people of Israel, who at a later period were also called Jews, had ministered unto them at once those visible benefits which they eagerly desired of the Lord in a carnal manner, and those chastisements, in the form of bodily punishments, which were intended to terrify them for the time, as was befitting for their obstinacy. And in all these, nevertheless, there were also spiritual mysteries signified, such as were meant to bear upon Christ and the Church; of which Church those saints also were members, although they existed in this life previous to the birth of Christ, the Lord, according to the flesh. For this same Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, the Word of the Father, equal and co-eternal with the Father, by whom all things were made, was Himself also made man for our sakes, in order that of the whole Church, as of His whole body, He might be the Head. But just as when the whole man is in the process of being born, although he may put the hand forth first in the act of birth, yet is that hand joined and compacted together with the whole body under the head, even as also among these same patriarchs some were born with the hand put forth first as a sign of this very thing: so all the saints who lived upon the earth previous to the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, although they were born antecedently, were nevertheless united under the Head with that universal body of which He is the Head.

## CHAPTER 20

### OF ISRAEL'S BONDAGE IN EGYPT, THEIR DELIVERANCE, AND THEIR PASSAGE THROUGH THE RED SEA

34. "That people, then, having been brought down into Egypt, were in bondage to the harshest of kings; and, taught by the most oppressive labors, they sought their deliverer in God; and there was sent to them one belonging to the people themselves, Moses, the holy servant of God, who, in the might of God, terrified the impious nation of the Egyptians in those days by great miracles, and led forth the people of God out of that land through the Red Sea, where the water parted and opened up a way for them as they crossed it, whereas, when the Egyptians pressed on in pursuit, the waves returned to their channel and overwhelmed them, so that they perished. Thus, then, just as the earth through the agency of the flood was cleansed by the waters from the wickedness of the sinners, who in those times were destroyed in their inundation, while the righteous escaped by means of the wood; so the people of God, when they went forth from Egypt, found a way through the waters by which their enemies were devoured. Nor was the sacrament of the wood wanting there. For Moses smote with his rod, in order that that miracle might be effected. Both these are signs of holy baptism, by which the faithful pass into the new life, while their sins are done away with like enemies, and perish. But more clearly was the passion of Christ prefigured in the case of that people, when they were commanded to slay and eat the lamb, and to mark their door-posts with its blood, and to celebrate this rite every year, and to designate it the Lord's passover. For surely prophecy speaks with the utmost plainness of the Lord Jesus Christ, when it says that "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter." And with the sign of His passion and cross, thou art this day to be marked on thy forehead, as on the door-post, and all Christians are marked with the same.

35. "Whereafter this people was conducted through the wilderness for forty years. They also received the law written by the finger of God, under which name the Holy Spirit is signified, as it is declared with the utmost plainness in the Gospel. For God is not defined by the form of a body, neither are members and fingers to be thought of as existent in Him in the way in

which we see them in ourselves. But, inasmuch as it is through the Holy Spirit that God's gifts are divided to His saints, in order that, although they vary in their capacities, they may nevertheless not lapse from the concord of charity, and inasmuch as it is especially in the fingers that there appears a certain kind of division, while nevertheless there is no separation from unity, this may be the explanation of the phrase. But whether this may be the case, or whatever other reason may be assigned for the Holy Spirit being called the finger of God, we ought not at any rate to think of the form of a human body when we hear this expression used. The people in question, then, received the law written by the finger of God, and that in good sooth on tables of stone, to signify the hardness of their heart in that they were not to fulfill the law. For, as they eagerly sought from the Lord gifts meant for the uses of the body, they were held by carnal fear rather than by spiritual charity. But nothing fulfills the law save charity. Consequently, they were burdened with many visible sacraments, to the intent that they should feel the pressure of the yoke of bondage in the observances of meats, and in the sacrifices of animals, and in other rites innumerable; which things, at the same time, were signs of spiritual matters relating to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Church; which, furthermore, at that time were both understood by a few holy men to the effect of yielding the fruit of salvation, and observed by them in accordance with the fitness of the time, while by the multitude of carnal men they were observed only and not understood.

36. "In this manner, then, through many varied signs of things to come, which it would be tedious to enumerate in complete detail, and which we now see in their fulfillment in the Church, that people were brought to the land of promise, in which they were to reign in a temporal and carnal way in accordance with their own longings: which earthly kingdom, nevertheless, sustained the image of a spiritual kingdom. There Jerusalem was founded, that most celebrated city of God, which, while in bondage, served as a sign of the free city, which is called the heavenly Jerusalem which latter term is a Hebrew word, and signifies by interpretation the vision of peace.' The citizens thereof are all sanctified men, who have been, who are, and who are yet to be; and all sanctified spirits, even as many as are obedient to God with pious devotion in the exalted regions of heaven,

and imitate not the impious pride of the devil and his angels. The King of this city is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, by whom the highest angels are governed, and at the same time the Word that took unto Himself human nature, in order that by Him men also might be governed, who, in His fellowship, shall reign all together in eternal peace. In the service of prefiguring this King in that earthly kingdom of the people of Israel, King David stood forth pre-eminent, of whose seed according to the flesh that truest King was to come, to wit, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever.' In that land of promise many things were done, which held good as figures of the Christ who was to come, and of the Church, with which you will have it in your power to acquaint yourself by degrees in the Holy Books.

## CHAPTER 21

### OF THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY, AND THE THINGS SIGNIFIED THEREBY

37. "Howbeit, after the lapse of some generations, another type was presented, which bears very emphatically on the matter in hand. For that city was brought into captivity, and a large section of the people were carried off into Babylonia. Now, as Jerusalem signifies the city and fellowship of the saints, so Babylonia signifies the city and fellowship of the wicked, seeing that by interpretation it denotes confusion. On the subject of these two cities, which have been running their courses, mingling the one with the other, through all the changes of time from the beginning of the human race, and which shall so move on together until the end of the world, when they are destined to be separated at the last judgment, we have spoken already a little ago. That captivity, then, of the city of Jerusalem, and the people thus carried into Babylonia in bondage, were ordained so to proceed by the Lord, by the voice of Jeremiah, a prophet of that time. And there appeared kings of Babylon, under whom they were in slavery, who on occasion of the captivity of this people were so wrought upon by certain miracles that they came to know the one true God who founded universal creation, and worshipped Him, and commanded that He should be worshipped. Moreover the people were ordered both to pray for those by whom they were detained in captivity, and in their peace to hope for peace, to the effect that they should beget children, and build houses, and plant



gardens and vineyards. But at the end of seventy years, release from their captivity was promised to them. All this, furthermore, signified in a figure that the Church of Christ in all His saints, who are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, would have to do service under the kings of this world. For the doctrine of the apostles speaks also in this wise, that every soul should be subject to the higher powers,' and that there should be rendered all things to all men, tribute to whom tribute (is due), custom to whom custom,' and all other things in like manner which, without detriment to the worship of our God, we render to the rulers in the constitution of human society: for the Lord Himself also, in order to set before us an example of this sound doctrine, did not deem it unworthy of Him to pay tribute on account of that human individuality wherewith He was invested. Again, Christian servants and good believers are also commanded to serve their temporal masters in equanimity and faithfulness; whom they will hereafter judge, if even on to the end they find them wicked, or with whom they will hereafter reign in equality, if they too shall have been converted to the true God. Still all are enjoined to be subject to the powers that are of man and of earth, even until, at the end of the predetermined time which the seventy years signify, the Church shall be delivered from the confusion of this world, like as Jerusalem was to be set free from the captivity in Babylonia. By occasion of that captivity, however, the kings of earth too have themselves been led to forsake the idols on account of which they were wont to persecute the Christians, and have come to know, and now worship, the one true God and Christ the Lord; and it is on their behalf that the Apostle Paul enjoins prayer to be made, even although they should persecute the Church. For he speaks in these terms: I entreat, therefore, that first of all supplications, adorations, intercessions, and givings of thanks be made for kings, for all men, and all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, with all godliness and charity.' Accordingly peace has been given to the Church by these same persons, although it be but of a temporal sort,—a temporal quiet for the work of building houses after a spiritual fashion, and planting gardens and vineyards. For witness your own case, too,—at this very time we are engaged, by means of this discourse, in building you up and planting you. And the like process is going on throughout the whole circle of lands, in virtue of the peace allowed by Christian kings, even as the same apostle thus expresses himself: Ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building.'

38. “And, indeed, after the lapse of the seventy years of which Jeremiah had mystically prophesied, to the intent of prefiguring the end of times, with a view still to the perfecting of that same figure, no settled peace and liberty were conceded again to the Jews. Thus it was that they were conquered subsequently by the Romans and made tributary. From that period, in truth, at which they received the land of promise and began to have kings, in order to preclude the supposition that the promise of the Christ who was to be their Liberator had met its complete fulfillment in the person of any one of their kings, Christ was prophesied of with greater clearness in a number of prophecies; not only by David himself in the book of Psalms, but also by the rest of the great and holy prophets, even on to the time of their conveyance into captivity in Babylonia; and in that same captivity there were also prophets whose mission was to prophesy of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Liberator of all. And after the restoration of the temple, when the seventy years had passed, the Jews sustained grievous oppressions and sufferings at the hands of the kings of the Gentiles, fitted to make them understand that the Liberator was not yet come, whom they failed to apprehend as one who was to effect for them a spiritual deliverance, and whom they fondly longed for on account of a carnal liberation.

## CHAPTER 22

### OF THE SIX AGES OF THE WORLD

39. “Five ages of the world, accordingly, having been now completed (there has entered the sixth). Of these ages the first is from the beginning of the human race, that is, from Adam, who was the first man that was made, down to Noah, who constructed the ark at the time of the flood. Then the second extends from that period on to Abraham, who was called the father indeed of all nations which should follow the example of his faith, but who at the same time in the way of natural descent from his own flesh was the father of the destined people of the Jews; which people, previous to the entrance of the Gentiles into the Christian faith, was the one people among all the nations of all lands that worshipped the one true God: from which people also Christ the Saviour was decreed to come according to the flesh. For these turning-points of those two ages occupy an eminent place in the

ancient books. On the other hand, those of the other three ages are also declared in the Gospel, where the descent of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh is likewise mentioned. For the third age extends from Abraham on to David the king; the fourth from David on to that captivity whereby the people of God passed over into Babylonia; and the fifth from that transmigration down to the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. With His coming the sixth age has entered on its process; so that now the spiritual grace, which in previous times was known to a few patriarchs and prophets, may be made manifest to all nations; to the intent that no man should worship God but freely, fondly desiring of Him not the visible rewards of His services and the happiness of this present life, but that eternal life alone in which he is to enjoy God Himself: in order that in this sixth age the mind of man may be renewed after the image of God, even as on the sixth day man was made after the image of God. For then, too, is the law fulfilled, when all that it has commanded is done, not in the strong desire for things temporal, but in the love of Him who has given the commandment. Who is there, moreover, who should not be earnestly disposed to give the return of love to a God of supreme righteousness and also of supreme mercy, who has first loved men of the greatest unrighteousness and the loftiest pride, and that, too, so deeply as to have sent in their behalf His only Son, by whom He made all things, and who being made man, not by any change of Himself, but by the assumption of human nature, was designed thus to become capable not only of living with them, but also of dying at once for them and by their hands?

40. “Thus, then, showing forth the New Testament of our everlasting inheritance, wherein man was to be renewed by the grace of God and lead a new life, that is, a spiritual life; and with the view of exhibiting the first one as an old dispensation, wherein a carnal people acting out the old man (with the exception of a few patriarchs and prophets, who had understanding, and some hidden saints), and leading a carnal life, desiderated carnal rewards at the hands of the Lord God, and received in that fashion but the figures of spiritual blessings;—with this intent, I say, the Lord Christ, when made man, despised all earthly good things, in order that He might show us how these things ought to be despised; and He endured all earthly ills which He was inculcating as things needful to be endured; so that neither might our

happiness be sought for in the former class, nor our unhappiness be apprehended in the latter. For being born of a mother who, although she conceived without being touched by man and always remained thus untouched, in virginity conceiving, in virginity bringing forth, in virginity dying, had nevertheless been espoused to a handicraftsman, He extinguished all the inflated pride of carnal nobility. Moreover, being born in the city of Bethlehem, which among all the cities of Judaea was so insignificant that even in our own day it is designated a village, He willed not that any one should glory in the exalted position of any city of earth. He, too, whose are all things and by whom all things were created, was made poor, in order that no one, while believing in Him, might venture to boast himself in earthly riches. He refused to be made by men a king, because He displayed the pathway of humility to those unhappy ones whom pride had separated from Him; and yet universal creation attests the fact of His everlasting kingdom. An hungered was He who feeds all men; athirst was He by whom is created whatsoever is drunk, and who in a spiritual manner is the bread of the hungry and the fountain of the thirsty; in journeying on earth, wearied was He who has made Himself the way for us into heaven; as like one dumb and deaf in the presence of His revilers was He by whom the dumb spoke and the deaf heard; bound was He who freed us from the bonds of infirmities; scourged was He who expelled from the bodies of man the scourges of all distresses; crucified was He who put an end to our crucial pains; dead did He become who raised the dead. But He also rose again, no more to die, so that no one should from Him learn so to condemn death as if he were never to live again.

## CHAPTER 23

### OF THE MISSION OF THE HOLY GHOST FIFTY DAYS AFTER CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

41. "Thereafter, having confirmed the disciples, and having sojourned with them forty days, He ascended up into heaven, as these same persons were beholding Him. And on the completion of fifty days from His resurrection He sent to them the Holy Spirit (for so He had promised), by whose agency they were to have love shed abroad in their hearts, to the end that they might be able to fulfill the law, not only without the sense of its being burdensome, but even with a joyful mind. This law was given to the Jews in

the ten commandments, which they call the Decalogue. And these commandments, again, are reduced to two, namely that we should love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind; and that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. For that on these two precepts hang all the law and the prophets, the Lord Himself has at once declared in the Gospel and shown in His own example. For thus it was likewise in the instance of the people of Israel, that from the day on which they first celebrated the passover in a form, slaying and eating the sheep, with whose blood their door-posts were marked for the securing of their safety,—from this day, I repeat, the fiftieth day in succession was completed, and then they received the law written by the finger of God, under which phrase we have already stated that the Holy Spirit is signified. And in the same manner, after the passion and resurrection of the Lord, who is the true passover, the Holy Ghost was sent personally to the disciples on the fiftieth day: not now, however, by tables of stone significant of the hardness of their hearts; but, when they were gathered together in one place at Jerusalem itself, suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as if a violent blast were being borne onwards, and there appeared to them tongues cloven like fire, and they began to speak with tongues, in such a manner that all those who had come to them recognized each his own language (for in that city the Jews were in the habit of assembling from every country wheresoever they had been scattered abroad, and had learned the diverse tongues of diverse nations); and thereafter, preaching Christ with all boldness, they wrought many signs in His name,—so much so, that as Peter was passing by, his shadow touched a certain dead person, and the man rose in life again.

42. “But when the Jews perceived so great signs to be wrought in the name of Him, whom, partly through ill-will and partly in ignorance, they crucified, some of them were provoked to persecute the apostles, who were His preachers; while others, on the contrary, marvelling the more at this very circumstance, that so great miracles were being performed in the name of Him whom they had derided as one overborne and conquered by themselves, repented, and were converted, so that thousands of Jews believed on Him. For these parties were not bent now on craving at the hand of God temporal benefits and an earthly kingdom, neither did they look any more for Christ, the promised king, in a carnal spirit; but they

continued in immortal fashion to apprehend and love Him, who in mortal fashion endured on their behalf at their own hands sufferings so heavy, and imparted to them the gift of forgiveness for all their sins, even down to the iniquity of His own blood, and by the example of His own resurrection unfolded immortality as the object which they should hope for and long for at His hands. Accordingly, now mortifying the earthly cravings of the old man, and inflamed with the new experience of the spiritual life, as the Lord had enjoined in the Gospel, they sold all that they had, and laid the price of their possessions at the feet of the apostles, in order that these might distribute to every man according as each had need; and living in Christian love harmoniously with each other, they did not affirm anything to be their own, but they had all things in common, and were one in soul and heart toward God. Afterwards these same persons also themselves suffered persecution in their flesh at the hands of the Jews, their carnal fellow-countrymen, and were dispersed abroad, to the end that, in consequence of their dispersion, Christ should be preached more extensively, and that they themselves at the same time should be followers of the patience of their Lord. For He who in meekness had endured them, enjoined them in meekness to endure for His sake.

43. “Among those same persecutors of the saints the Apostle Paul had once also ranked; and he raged with eminent violence against the Christians. But, subsequently, he became a believer and an apostle, and was sent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, suffering (in that ministry) things more grievous on behalf of the name of Christ than were those which he had done against the name of Christ. Moreover, in establishing churches throughout all the nations where he was sowing the seed of the gospel, he was wont to give earnest injunction that, as these converts (coming as they did from the worship of idols and without experience in the worship of the one God) could not readily serve God in the way of selling and distributing their possessions, they should make offerings for the poor brethren among the saints who were in the churches of Judea which had believed in Christ. In this manner the doctrine of the apostle constituted some to be, as it were, soldiers, and others to be, as it were, provincial tributaries, while it set Christ in the centre of them like the corner-stone (in accordance with what had been announced beforetime by the prophet), in whom both parties, like

walls advancing from different sides, that is to say, from Jews and from Gentiles, might be joined together in the affection of kinship. But at a later period heavier and more frequent persecutions arose from the unbelieving Gentiles against the Church of Christ, and day by day was fulfilled that prophetic word which the Lord spake when He said, Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves.'

## CHAPTER 24

### OF THE CHURCH IN ITS LIKENESS TO A VINE SPROUTING AND SUFFERING PRUNING

44. "But that vine, which was spreading forth its fruitful shoots throughout the circle of lands, according as had been prophesied with regard to it, and as had been foretold by the Lord Himself, sprouted all the more luxuriantly in proportion as it was watered with richer streams of the blood of martyrs. And as these died in behalf of the truth of the faith in countless numbers throughout all lands, even the persecuting kingdoms themselves desisted, and were converted to the knowledge and worship of Christ, with the neck of their pride broken. Moreover it behoved that this same vine should be pruned in accordance with the Lord's repeated predictions, and that the unfruitful twigs should be cut out of it, by which heresies and schisms were occasioned in various localities, under the name of Christ, on the part of men who sought not His glory but their own; whose oppositions, however, also served more and more to discipline the Church, and to test and illustrate both its doctrine and its patience.

45. "All these things, then, we now perceive to be realized precisely as we read of them in predictions uttered so long before the event. And as the first Christians, inasmuch as they did not see these things literally made good in their own day, were moved by miracles to believe them; so as regards ourselves, inasmuch as all these things have now been brought to pass exactly as we read of them in those books which were written a long time previous to the fulfillment of the things in question, wherein they were all announced as matters yet future, even as they are now seen to be actually present, we are built up unto faith, so that, enduring and persevering in the Lord, we believe without any hesitation in the destined accomplishment even of those things which still remain to be realized. For, indeed, in the

same Scriptures, tribulations yet to come are still read of, as well as the final day of judgment itself, when all the citizens of these two states shall receive their bodies again, and rise and give account of their life before the judgment-seat of Christ. For He will come in the glory of His power, who of old condescended to come in the lowliness of humanity; and He will separate all the godly from the ungodly,—not only from those who have utterly refused to believe in Him at all, but also from those who have believed in Him to no purpose and without fruit. To the one class He will give an eternal kingdom together with Himself, while to the other He will award eternal punishment together with the devil. But as no joy yielded by things temporal can be found in any measure comparable to the joy of life eternal which the saints are destined to attain, so no torment of temporal punishments can be compared to the everlasting torments of the unrighteous.

## CHAPTER 25

### OF CONSTANCY IN THE FAITH OF THE RESURRECTION

46. “Therefore, brother, confirm yourself in the name and help of Him in whom you believe, so as to withstand the tongues of those who mock at our faith, in whose case the devil speaks seductive words, bent above all on making a mockery of the faith in a resurrection. But, judging from your own history, believe that, seeing you have been, you will also be hereafter, even as you perceive yourself now to be, although previously you were not. For where was this great structure of your body, and where this formation and compacted connection of members a few years ago, before you were born, or even before you were conceived in your mother’s womb? Where, I repeat, was then this structure and this stature of your body? Did it not come forth to light from the hidden secrets of this creation, under the invisible formative operations of the Lord God, and did it not rise to its present magnitude and fashion by those fixed measures of increase which come with the successive periods of life? Is it then in any way a difficult thing for God, who also in a moment brings together out of secrecy the masses of the clouds and veils the heavens in an instant of time, to make this quantity of your body again what it was, seeing that He was able to make it what formerly it was not? Consequently, believe with a manful and



unshaken spirit that all those things which seem to be withdrawn from the eyes of men as if to perish, are safe and exempt from loss in relation to the omnipotence of God, who will restore them, without any delay or difficulty, when He is so minded,—those of them at least, I should say, that are judged by His justice to merit restoration; in order that men may give account of their deeds in their very bodies in which they have done them; and that in these they may be deemed worthy to receive either the exchange of heavenly incorruption in accordance with the deserts of their piety, or the corruptible condition of body in accordance with the deserts of their wickedness,—and that, too, not a condition such as may be done away with by death, but such as shall furnish material for everlasting pains.

47. “Flee, therefore, by steadfast faith and good manners,—flee, brother, those torments in which neither the torturers fail, nor do the tortured die; to whom it is death without end, to be unable to die in their pains. And be kindled with love and longing for the everlasting life of the saints, in which neither will action be toilsome nor will rest be indolent; in which the praise of God will be without irksomeness and without defect; wherein there will be no weariness in the mind, no exhaustion in the body; wherein, too, there shall be no want, whether on your own part, so that you should crave for relief, or on your neighbor’s part, so that you should be in haste to carry relief to him. God will be the whole enjoyment and satisfaction of that holy city, which lives in Him and of Him, in wisdom and beatitude. For as we hope and look for what has been promised by Him, we shall be made equal to the angels of God, and together with them we shall enjoy that Trinity now by sight, wherein at present we walk by faith. For we believe that which we see not, in order that through these very deserts of faith we may be counted worthy also to see that which we believe, and to abide in it; to the intent that these mysteries of the equality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the unity of this same Trinity, and the manner in which these three subsistences are one God, need no more be uttered by us in words of faith and sounding syllables, but may be drunk in in purest and most burning contemplation in that silence.

48. “These things hold fixed in your heart, and call upon the God in whom you believe, to defend you against the temptations of the devil; and be

careful, lest that adversary come stealthily upon you from a strange quarter, who, as a most malevolent solace for his own damnation, seeks others whose companionship he may obtain in that damnation. For he is bold enough not only to tempt Christian people through the instrumentality of those who hate the Christian name, or are pained to see the world taken possession of by that name, and still fondly desire to do service to idols and to the curious rites of evil spirits, but at times he also attempts the same through the agency of such men as we have mentioned a little ago, to wit, persons severed from the unity of the Church, like the twigs which are lopped off when the vine is pruned, who are called heretics or schismatics. Howbeit sometimes also he makes the same effort by means of the Jews, seeking to tempt and seduce believers by their instrumentality. Nevertheless, what ought above all things to be guarded against is, that no individual may suffer himself to be tempted and deceived by men who are within the Catholic Church itself, and who are borne by it like the chaff that is sustained against the time of its winnowing. For in being patient toward such persons, God has this end in view, namely, to exercise and confirm the faith and prudence of His elect by means of the perverseness of these others while at the same time He also takes account of the fact that many of their number make an advance, and are converted to the doing of the good pleasure of God with a great impetus, when led to take pity upon their own souls. For not all treasure up for themselves, through the patience of God, wrath in the day of the wrath of His just judgment; but many are brought by the same patience of the Almighty to the most wholesome pain of repentance. And until that is effected, they are made the means of exercising not only the forbearance, but also the compassion of those who are already holding by the right way. Accordingly, you will have to witness many drunkards, covetous men, deceivers, gamesters, adulterers, fornicators, men who bind upon their persons sacrilegious charms and others given up to sorcerers and astrologers, and diviners practised in all kinds of impious arts. You will also have to observe how those very crowds which fill the theatres on the festal days of the pagans also fill the churches on the festal days of the Christians. And when you see these things you will be tempted to imitate them. Nay, why should I use the expression, you will see, in reference to what you assuredly are acquainted with even already? For you are not ignorant of the fact that many who are called Christians

engage in all these evil things which I have briefly mentioned. Neither are you ignorant that at times, perchance, men whom you know to bear the name of Christians are guilty of even more grievous offenses than these. But if you have come with the notion that you may do such things as in a secured position, you are greatly in error; neither will the name of Christ be of any avail to you when He begins to judge in utmost strictness, who also of old condescended in utmost mercy to come to man's relief. For He Himself has foretold these things, and speaks to this effect in the Gospel: Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father. Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, in thy name we have eaten and drunken.' For all, therefore, who persevere in such works the end is damnation. Consequently, when you see many not only doing these things but also defending and recommending them, keep yourself firmly by the law of God, and follow not its willful transgressors. For it is not according to their mind, but according to His truth that you will be judged.

49. "Associate with the good, whom you perceive to be at one with you in loving your King. For there are many such for you to discover, if you also begin to cultivate that character yourself. For if in the public spectacles you wished to be in congenial company, and to attach yourself closely to men who are united with you in a liking for some charioteer, or some hunter, or some player or other, how much more ought you to find pleasure in associating with those who are at one with you in loving that God, with regard to whom no one that loves Him shall ever have cause for the blush of shame, inasmuch as not only is He Himself incapable of being overcome, but He will also render those unconquerable who are affectionately disposed toward Him. At the same time, not even on those same good men, who either anticipate you or accompany you on the way to God, ought you to set your hope, seeing that no more ought you to place it on yourself, however great may be the progress you have made, but on Him who justifies both them and you, and thus makes you what you are. For you are secure in God, because He changes not; but in man no one prudently counts himself secure. But if we ought to love those who are not righteous as yet, with the view that they may be so, how much more warmly ought those to be loved who already are righteous? At the same time, it is one thing to love

man, and another thing to set one's hope in man; and the difference is so great, that God enjoins the one and forbids the other. Moreover, if you have to sustain either any insults or any sufferings in the cause of the name of Christ, and neither fall away from the faith nor decline from the good way, you are certain to receive the greater reward; whereas those who give way to the devil in such circumstances, lose even the less reward. But be humble toward God, in order that He may not permit you to be tempted beyond your strength."

## CHAPTER 26

### OF THE FORMAL ADMISSION OF THE CATECHUMEN, AND OF THE SIGNS THEREIN MADE USE OF

50. At the conclusion of this address the person is to be asked whether he believes these things and earnestly desires to observe them. And on his replying to that effect then certainly he is to be solemnly signed and dealt with in accordance with the custom of the Church. On the subject of the sacrament, indeed, which he receives, it is first to be well impressed upon his notice that the signs of divine things are, it is true, things visible, but that the invisible things themselves are also honored in them, and that that species, which is then sanctified by the blessing, is therefore not to be regarded merely in the way in which it is regarded in any common use. And thereafter he ought to be told what is also signified by the form of words to which he has listened, and what in him is seasoned by that (spiritual grace) of which this material substance presents the emblem. Next we should take occasion by that ceremony to admonish him that, if he hears anything even in the Scriptures which may carry a carnal sound, he should, even although he fails to understand it, nevertheless believe that something spiritual is signified thereby, which bears upon holiness of character and the future life. Moreover, in this way he learns briefly that, whatever he may hear in the canonical books of such a kind as to make him unable to refer it to the love of eternity, and of truth, and of sanctity, and to the love of our neighbor, he should believe that to have been spoken or done with a figurative significance; and that, consequently, he should endeavor to understand it in such a manner as to refer it to that twofold (duty of) love. He should be further admonished, however, not to take the term neighbor in a carnal

sense, but to understand under it every one who may ever be with him in that holy city, whether there already or not yet apparent. And (he should finally be counselled) not to despair of the amendment of any man whom he perceives to be living under the patience of God for no other reason, as the apostle says, than that he may be brought to repentance.

51. If this discourse, in which I have supposed myself to have been teaching some uninstructed person in my presence, appears to you to be too long, you are at liberty to expound these matters with greater brevity. I do not think, however, that it ought to be longer than this. At the same time, much depends on what the case itself, as it goes on, may render advisable, and what the audience actually present shows itself not only to bear, but also to desire. When, however, rapid despatch is required, notice with what facility the whole matter admits of being explained. Suppose once more that some one comes before us who desires to be a Christian; and accordingly, suppose further that he has been interrogated, and that he has returned the answer which we have taken the former catechumen to have given; for, even should he decline to make this reply, it must at least be said that he ought to have given it;—then all that remains to be said to him should be put together in the following manner:—

52. Of a truth, brother, that is great and true blessedness which is promised to the saints in a future world. All visible things, on the other hand, pass away, and all the pomp, and pleasure, and solicitude of this world will perish, and (even now) they drag those who love them along with them onward to destruction. The merciful God, willing to deliver men from this destruction, that is to say, from everlasting pains, if they should not prove enemies to themselves, and if they should not withstand the mercy of their Creator, sent His only-begotten Son, that is to say, His Word, equal with Himself, by whom He made all things. And He, while abiding indeed in His divinity, and neither receding from the Father nor being changed in anything, did at the same time, by taking on Himself human nature, and appearing to men in mortal flesh, come unto men; in order that, just as death entered among the human race by one man, to wit, the first that was made, that is to say, Adam, because he consented unto his wife when she was seduced by the devil to the effect that they (both) transgressed the

commandment of God; even so by one man, Jesus Christ, who is also God, the Son of God, all those who believe in Him might have all their past sins done away with, and enter into eternal life.

## CHAPTER 27

### OF THE PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THEIR VISIBLE FULFILLMENT IN THE CHURCH

53. “For all those things, which at present you witness in the Church of God, and which you see to be taking place under the name of Christ throughout the whole world, were predicted long ages ago. And even as we read of them, so also we now see them. And by means of these things we are built up unto faith. Once of old there occurred a flood over the whole earth, the object of which was that sinners might be destroyed. And, nevertheless, those who escaped in the ark exhibited a sacramental sign of the Church that was to be, which at present is floating on the waves of the world, and is delivered from submersion by the wood of the cross of Christ. It was predicted to Abraham, a faithful servant of God, a single man, that of Him it was determined that a people should be born who should worship one God in the midst of all other nations which worshipped idols; and all things which were prophesied of as destined to happen to that people have come to pass exactly as they were foretold. Among that people Christ, the King of all saints and their God, was also prophesied of as destined to come of the seed of that same Abraham according to the flesh, which (flesh) He took unto Himself, in order that all those also who became followers of His faith might be sons of Abraham; and thus it has come to pass: Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, who belonged to that race. It was foretold by the prophets that He would suffer on the cross at the hands of that same people of the Jews, of whose lineage, according to the flesh, He came; and thus it has come to pass. It was foretold that He would rise again: He has risen again; and, in accordance with these same predictions of the prophets, He has ascended into heaven and has sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples. It was foretold not only by the prophets, but also by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that His Church would exist throughout the whole world, extended by the martyrdoms and sufferings of the saints; and this was foretold at a time when as yet His name was at once undeclared to the Gentiles, and

made a subject of derision where it was known; and, nevertheless, in the power of His miracles, whether those which He wrought by His own hand or those which he effected by means of His servants, as these things are being reported and believed, we already see the fulfillment of that which was predicted, and behold the very kings of the earth, who formerly were wont to persecute the Christians, even now brought into subjection to the name of Christ. It was also foretold that schisms and heresies would arise from His Church, and that under His name they would seek their own glory instead of Christ's, in such places as they might be able to command; and these predictions have been realized.

54. "Will those things, then, which yet remain fail to come to pass? It is manifest that, just as the former class of things which were foretold have come to pass, so will these latter also come to pass. I refer to all the tribulations of the righteous, which yet wait for fulfillment, and to the day of judgment, which will separate all the wicked from the righteous in the resurrection of the dead;—and not only will it thus separate those wicked men who are outside the Church, but also it will set apart for the fire, which is due to such, the chaff of the Church itself, which must be borne with in utmost patience on to the last winnowing. Moreover, they who deride the (doctrine of a) resurrection, because they think that this flesh, inasmuch as it becomes corrupt, cannot rise again, will certainly rise in the same unto punishment, and God will make it plain to such, that He who was able to form these bodies when as yet they were not, is able in a moment to restore them as they were. But all the faithful who are destined to reign with Christ shall rise with the same body in such wise that they may also be counted worthy to be changed into angelic incorruption; so that they may be made equal unto the angels of God, even as the Lord Himself has promised; and that they may praise Him without any failure and without any weariness, ever living in Him and of Him, with such joy and blessedness as can be neither expressed nor conceived by man.

55. "Believe these things, therefore, and be on your guard against temptations (for the devil seeks for others who may be brought to perish along with himself); so that not only may that adversary fail to seduce you by the help of those who are without the Church, whether they be pagans,

or Jews, or heretics; but you yourself also may decline to follow the example of those within the Catholic Church itself whom you see leading an evil life, either indulging in excess in the pleasures of the belly and the throat, or unchaste, or given up to the vain and unlawful observances of curious superstitions, whether they be addicted to (the inanities of) public spectacles, or charms, or divinations of devils, or be living in the pomp and inflated arrogance of covetousness and pride, or be pursuing any sort of life which the law condemns and punishes. But rather connect yourself with the good, whom you will easily find out, if you yourself were once become of that character; so that you may unite with each other in worshipping and loving God for His own sake; for He himself will be our complete reward to the intent that we may enjoy His goodness and beauty in that life. He is to be loved, however, not in the way in which any object that is seen with the eyes is loved, but as wisdom is loved, and truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and charity, and whatever else may be mentioned as of kindred nature; and further, with a love conformable to these things not as they are in men, but as they are in the very fountain of incorruptible and unchangeable wisdom. Whomsoever, therefore, you may observe to be loving these things, attach yourself to them, so that through Christ, who became man in order that He might be the Mediator between God and men, you may be reconciled to God. But as regards the perverse, even if they find their way within the walls of the Church, think not that they will find their way into the kingdom of heaven; for in their own time they will be set apart, if they have not altered to the better. Consequently, follow the example of good men, bear with the wicked, love all; forasmuch as you know not what he will be to-morrow who to-day is evil. Howbeit, love not the unrighteousness of such; but love the persons themselves with the express intent that they may apprehend righteousness; for not only is the love of God enjoined upon us, but also the love of our neighbor, on which two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. And this is fulfilled by no one save the man who has received the (other) gift, the Holy Spirit, who is indeed equal with the Father and with the Son; for this same Trinity is God; and on this God every hope ought to be placed. On man our hope ought not to be placed, of whatsoever character he may be. For He, by whom we are justified, is one thing; and they, together with whom we are justified, are another. Moreover, it is not only by lusts that the devil tempts,



but also by the terrors of insults, and pains, and death itself. But whatever a man shall have suffered on behalf of the name of Christ, and for the sake of the hope of eternal life, and shall have endured in constancy, (in accordance therewith) the greater reward shall be given him; whereas, if he shall give way to the devil, he shall be damned along with him. But works of mercy, conjoined with pious humility, meet with this acknowledgment from God, to wit, that He will not suffer His servants to be tempted more than they are able to bear.”

# ON THE CREED

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

DE SYMBOLO AD CATECHUMENOS.

A SERMON TO THE CATECHUMENS.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD

1. Receive, my children, the Rule of Faith, which is called the Symbol (or Creed ). And when ye have received it, write it in your heart, and be daily saying it to yourselves; before ye sleep, before ye go forth, arm you with your Creed. The Creed no man writes so as it may be able to be read: but for rehearsal of it, lest haply forgetfulness obliterate what care hath delivered, let your memory be your record-roll: what ye are about to hear, that are ye to believe; and what ye shall have believed, that are about to give back with your tongue. For the Apostle says, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” For this is the Creed which ye are to rehearse and to repeat in answer. These words which ye have heard are in the Divine Scriptures scattered up and down: but thence gathered and reduced into one, that the memory of slow persons might not be distressed; that every person may be able to say, able to hold, what he believes. For have ye now merely heard that God is Almighty? But ye begin to have him for your father, when ye have been born by the church as your Mother.

2. Of this, then, ye have now received, have meditated, and having meditated have held, that ye should say, “I believe in God the Father Almighty.” God is Almighty, and yet, though Almighty, He cannot die, cannot be deceived, cannot lie; and, as the Apostle says, “cannot deny Himself.” How many things that He cannot do, and yet is Almighty! yea

therefore is Almighty, because He cannot do these things. For if He could die, He were not Almighty; if to lie, if to be deceived, if to do unjustly, were possible for Him, He were not Almighty: because if this were in Him, He should not be worthy to be Almighty. To our Almighty Father, it is quite impossible to sin. He does whatsoever He will: that is Omnipotence. He does whatsoever He rightly will, whatsoever He justly will: but whatsoever is evil to do, He wills not. There is no resisting one who is Almighty, that He should not do what He will. It was He Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, invisible and visible. Invisible such as are in heaven, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, archangels, angels: all, if we shall live aright, our fellow-citizens. He made in heaven the things visible; the sun, the moon, the stars. With its terrestrial animals He adorned the earth, filled the air with things that fly, the land with them that walk and creep, the sea with them that swim: all He filled with their own proper creatures. He made also man after His own image and likeness, in the mind: for in that is the image of God. This is the reason why the mind cannot be comprehended even by itself, because in it is the image of God. To this end were we made, that over the other creatures we should bear rule: but through sin in the first man we fell, and are all come into an inheritance of death. We were brought low, became mortal, were filled with fears, with errors: this by desert of sin: with which desert and guilt is every man born. This is the reason why, as ye have seen to-day, as ye know, even little children undergo exsufflation, exorcism; to drive away from them the power of the devil their enemy, which deceived man that it might possess mankind. It is not then the creature of God that in infants undergoes exorcism or exsufflation: but he under whom are all that are born with sin; for he is the first of sinners. And for this cause by reason of one who fell and brought all into death, there was sent One without sin, Who should bring unto life, by delivering them from sin, all that believe on Him.

3. For this reason we believe also in His Son, that is to say, God the Father Almighty's, "His Only Son, our Lord." When thou hearest of the Only Son of God, acknowledge Him God. For it could not be that God's Only Son should not be God. What He is, the same did He beget, though He is not that Person Whom He begot. If He be truly Son, He is that which the Father is; if He be not that which the Father is, He is not truly Son. Observe mortal

and earthly creatures: what each is, that it engendereth. Man besets not an ox, sheep besets not dog, nor dog sheep. Whatever it be that begetteth, that which it is, it begetteth. Hold ye therefore boldly, firmly, faithfully, that the Begotten of God the Father is what Himself is, Almighty. These mortal creatures engender by corruption. Does God so beget? He that is begotten mortal generates that which himself is; the Immortal generates what He is: corruptible begets corruptible, Incorruptible begets Incorruptible: the corruptible begets corruptibly, Incorruptible, Incorruptibly: yea, so begetteth what Itself is, that One begets One, and therefore Only. Ye know, that when I pronounced to you the Creed, so I said, and so ye are bounden to believe; that we “believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His Only Son.” Here too, when thou believest that He is the Only, believe Him Almighty: for it is not to be thought that God the Father does what He will, and God the Son does not what He will. One Will of Father and Son, because one Nature. For it is impossible for the will of the Son to be any whit parted from the Father’s will. God and God; both one God: Almighty and Almighty; both One Almighty.

4. We do not bring in two Gods as some do, who say, “God the Father and God the Son, but greater God the Father and lesser God the Son.” They both are what? Two Gods? Thou blushest to speak it, blush to believe it. Lord God the Father, thou sayest, and Lord God the Son: and the Son Himself saith, “No man can serve two Lords.” In His family shall we be in such wise, that, like as in a great house where there is the father of a family and he hath a son, so we should say, the greater Lord, the lesser Lord? Shrink from such a thought. If ye make to yourselves such like in your heart, ye set up idols in the “one soul.” Utterly repel it. First believe, then understand. Now to whom God gives that when he has believed he soon understands; that is God’s gift, not human frailness. Still, if ye do not yet understand, believe: One God the Father, God Christ the Son of God. Both are what? One God. And how are both said to be One God? How? Dost thou marvel? In the Acts of the Apostles, “There was,” it says, “in the believers, one soul and one heart.” There were many souls, faith had made them one. So many thousands of souls were there; they loved each other, and many are one: they loved God in the fire of charity, and from being many they are come to the oneness of beauty. If all those many souls the

dearness of love made one soul, what must be the dearness of love in God, where is no diversity, but entire equality! If on earth and among men there could be so great charity as of so many souls to make one soul, where Father from Son, Son from Father, hath been ever inseparable, could They both be other than One God? Only, those souls might be called both many souls and one soul; but God, in Whom is ineffable and highest conjunction, may be called One God, not two Gods.

5. The Father doeth what He will, and what He will doeth the Son. Do not imagine an Almighty Father and a not Almighty Son: it is error, blot it out within you, let it not cleave in your memory, let it not be drunk into your faith, and if haply any of you shall have drunk it in, let him vomit it up. Almighty is the Father, Almighty the Son. If Almighty begat not Almighty, He begat not very Son. For what say we, brethren, if the Father being greater begat a Son less than He? What said I, begat? Man engenders, being greater, a son being less: it is true: but that is because the one grows old, the other grows up, and by very growing attains to the form of his father. The Son of God, if He groweth not because neither can God wax old, was begotten perfect. And being begotten perfect, if He groweth not, and remained not less, He is equal. For that ye may know Almighty begotten of Almighty, hear Him Who is Truth. That which of Itself Truth saith, is true. What saith Truth? What saith the Son, Who is Truth? "Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also the Son likewise doeth." The Son is Almighty, in doing all things that He willeth to do. For if the Father doeth some things which the Son doeth not, the Son said falsely, "Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also the Son doeth likewise." But because the Son spake truly, believe it: "Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also the Son doeth likewise," and ye have believed in the Son that He is Almighty. Which word although ye said not in the Creed, yet this is it that ye expressed when ye believed in the Only Son, Himself God. Hath the Father aught that the Son hath not? This Arian heretic blasphemers say, not I. But what say I? If the Father hath aught that the Son hath not, the Son lieth in saying, "All things that the Father hath, are Mine." Many and innumerable are the testimonies by which it is proved that the Son is Very Son of God the Father, and the Father God hath His Very-begotten Son God, and Father and Son is One God.

6. But this Only Son of God, the Father Almighty, let us see what He did for us, what He suffered for us. “Born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary.” He, so great God, equal with the Father, born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary, born lowly, that thereby He might heal the proud. Man exalted himself and fell; God humbled Himself and raised him up. Christ’s lowliness, what is it? God hath stretched out an hand to man laid low. We fell, He descended: we lay low, He stooped. Let us lay hold and rise, that we fall not into punishment. So then His stooping to us is this, “Born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary.” His very Nativity too as man, it is lowly, and it is lofty. Whence lowly? That as man He was born of men. Whence lofty? That He was born of a virgin. A virgin conceived, a virgin bore, and after the birth was a virgin still.

7. What next? “Suffered under Pontius Pilate.” He was in office as governor and was the judge, this same Pontius Pilate, what time as Christ suffered. In the name of the judge there is a mark of the times, when He suffered under Pontius Pilate: when He suffered, “was crucified, dead, and buried.” Who? what? for whom? Who? God’s Only Son, our Lord. What? Crucified, dead, and buried. For whom? for ungodly and sinners. Great condescension, great grace! “What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath bestowed on me?”

8. He was begotten before all times, before all worlds. “Begotten before.” Before what, He in Whom is no before? Do not in the least imagine any time before that Nativity of Christ whereby He was begotten of the Father; of that Nativity I am speaking by which He is Son of God Almighty, His Only Son our Lord; of that am I first speaking. Do not imagine in this Nativity a beginning of time; do not imagine any space of eternity in which the Father was and the Son was not. Since when the Father was, since then the Son. And what is that “since,” where is no beginning? Therefore ever Father without beginning, ever Son without beginning. And how, thou wilt say, was He begotten, if He have no beginning? Of eternal, coeternal. At no time was the Father, and the Son not, and yet Son of Father was begotten. Whence is any manner of similitude to be had? We are among things of earth, we are in the visible creature. Let the earth give me a similitude: it gives none. Let the element of the waters give me some similitude: it hath

not whereof to give. Some animal give me a similitude: neither can this do it. An animal indeed engenders, both what engenders and what is engendered: but first is the father, and then is born the son. Let us find the coeval and imagine it coeternal. If we shall be able to find a father coeval with his son, and son coeval with his father, let us believe God the Father coeval with His Son, and God the Son coeternal with His Father. On earth we can find some coeval, we cannot find any coeternal. Let us stretch the coeval and imagine it coeternal. Some one, it may be, will put you on the stretch, by saying, "When is it possible for a father to be found coeval with his son, or son coeval with his father? That the father may beget he goes before in age; that the son may be begotten, he comes after in age: but this father coeval with son, or son with father, how can it be?" Imagine to yourselves fire as father, its shining as son; see, we have found the coevals. From the instant that the fire begins to be, that instant it begets the shining: neither fire before shining, nor shining after fire. And if we ask, which begets which? the fire the shining, or the shining the fire? Immediately ye conceive by natural sense, by the innate wit of your minds ye all cry out, The fire the shining, not the shining the fire. Lo, here you have a father beginning; lo, a son at the same time, neither going before nor coming after. Lo, here then is a father beginning, lo, a son at the same time beginning. If I have shown you a father beginning, and a son at the same time beginning, believe the Father not beginning, and with Him the Son not beginning either; the one eternal, the other coeternal. If ye get on with your learning, ye understand: take pains to get on. The being born, ye have; but also the growing, ye ought to have; because no man begins with being perfect. As for the Son of God, indeed, He could be born perfect, because He was begotten without time, coeternal with the Father, long before all things, not in age, but in eternity. He then was begotten coeternal, of which generation the Prophet said, "His generation who shall declare?" begotten of the Father without time, He was born of the Virgin in the fullness of times. This nativity had times going before it. In opportunity of time, when He would, when He knew, then was He born: for He was not born without His will. None of us is born because he will, and none of us dies when he will: He, when He would, was born; when He would, He died: how He would, He was born of a Virgin: how He would, He died; on the cross. Whatever He

would, He did: because He was in such wise Man that, unseen, He was God; God assuming, Man assumed; One Christ, God and Man.

9. Of His cross what shall I speak, what say? This extremest kind of death He chose, that not any kind of death might make His Martyrs afraid. The doctrine He shewed in His life as Man, the example of patience He demonstrated in His Cross. There, you have the work, that He was crucified; example of the work, the Cross; reward of the work, Resurrection. He shewed us in the Cross what we ought to endure, He shewed in the Resurrection what we have to hope. Just like a consummate task-master in the matches of the arena, He said, Do, and bear; do the work and receive the prize; strive in the match and thou shall be crowned. What is the work? Obedience. What the prize? Resurrection without death. Why did I add, “without death?” Because “Lazarus rose, and died: Christ rose again, “dieth no more, death will no longer have dominion over Him.”

10. Scripture saith, “Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord.” When we read what great trials Job endured, it makes one shudder, it makes one shrink, it makes one quake. And what did he receive? The double of what he had lost. Let not a man therefore with an eye to temporal rewards be willing to have patience, and say to himself, “Let me endure loss, God will give me back sons twice as many; Job received double of all, and begat as many sons as he had buried.” Then is this not the double? Yes, precisely the double, because the former sons still lived. Let none say, “Let me bear evils, and God will repay me as He repaid Job:” that it be now no longer patience but avarice. For if it was not patience which that Saint had, nor a brave enduring of all that came upon him; the testimony which the Lord gave, whence should he have it? “Hast thou observed,” saith the Lord, “my servant Job? For there is not like him any on the earth, a man without fault, true worshipper of God.” What a testimony, my brethren, did this holy man deserve of the Lord! And yet him a bad woman sought by her persuasion to deceive, she too representing that serpent, who, like as in Paradise he deceived the man whom God first made, so likewise here by suggesting blasphemy thought to be able to deceive a man who pleased God. What things he suffered, my brethren! Who can have so much to suffer in his estate, his house, his sons, his flesh,



yea in his very wife who was left to be his tempter! But even her who was left, the devil would have taken away long ago, but that he kept her to be his helper: because by Eve he had mastered the first man, therefore had he kept an Eve. What things, then, he suffered! He lost all that he had; his house fell; would that were all! it crushed his sons also. And, to see that patience had great place in him, hear what he answered; "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so hath it been done; blessed be the name of the Lord." He hath taken what He gave, is He lost Who gave? He hath taken what He gave. As if he should say, He hath taken away all, let Him take all, send me away naked, and let me keep Him. What shall I lack if I have God? or what is the good of all else to me, if I have not God? Then it came to his flesh, he was stricken with a wound from head to foot; he was one running sore, one mass of crawling worms: and showed himself immovable in his God, stood fixed. The woman wanted, devil's helper as she was not husband's comforter, to put him up to blaspheme God. "How long," said she, "dost thou suffer" so and so; "speak some word against the Lord, and die." So then, because he had been brought low, he was to be exalted. And this the Lord did, in order to show it to men; as for His servant, He kept greater things for him in heaven. So then Job who was brought low, He exalted; the devil who was lifted up, He brought low: for "He putteth down one and setteth up another." But let not any man, my beloved brethren, when he suffers any such-like tribulations, look for a reward here: for instance, if he suffer any losses, let him not peradventure say, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord;" only with the mind to receive twice as much again. Let patience praise God, not avarice. If what thou hast lost thou seekest to receive back twofold, and therefore praisest God, it is of covetousness thou praisest, not of love. Do not imagine this to be the example of that holy man; thou deceivest thyself. When Job was enduring all, he was not hoping for to have twice as much again. Both in his first confession when he bore up under his losses, and bore out to the grave the dead bodies of his sons, and in the second when he was now suffering torments of sores in his flesh, ye may observe what I am saying. Of his former confession the words run thus: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord." He might have said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away;

He that took away can once more give; can bring back more than He took.” He said not this, but, “As it pleased the Lord,” said he, “so is it done:” because it pleases Him, let it please me: let not that which hath pleased the good Lord misplease His submissive servant; what pleased the Physician, not misplease the sick man. Hear his other confession: “Thou hast spoken,” said he to his wife, “like one of the foolish women. If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, why shall we not bear evil?” He did not add, what, if he had said it, would have been true. “The Lord is able both to bring back my flesh into its former condition, and that which He hath taken away from us, to make manifold more:” lest he should seem to have endured in hope of this. This was not what he said, not what he hoped. But, that we might be taught, did the Lord that for him, not hoping for it, by which we should be taught, that God was with him: because if He had not also restored to him those things, there was the crown indeed, but hidden, and we could not see it. And therefore what says the divine Scripture in exhorting to patience and hope of things future, not reward of things present? “Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord.” Why is it, “the patience of Job,” and not, Ye have seen the end of Job himself? Thou wouldest open thy mouth for the “twice as much;” wouldest say, “Thanks be to God; let me bear up: I receive twice as much again, like Job.” “Patience of Job, end of the Lord.” The patience of Job we know, and the end of the Lord we know. What end of the Lord? “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” They are the words of the Lord hanging on the cross. He did as it were leave Him for present felicity, not leave Him for eternal immortality. In this is “the end of the Lord.” The Jews hold Him, the Jews insult, the Jews bind Him, crown Him with thorns, dishonor Him with spitting, scourge Him, overwhelm Him with revilings, hang Him upon the tree, pierce Him with a spear, last of all bury Him. He was as it were left: but by whom? By those insulting ones. Therefore thou shall but to this end have patience, that thou mayest rise again and not die, that is, never die, even as Christ. For so we read, “Christ rising from the dead henceforth dieth not.”

11. “He ascended into heaven:” believe. “He sitteth at the right hand of the Father:” believe. By sitting, understand dwelling: as [in Latin] we say of any person, “In that country he dwelt (sedit) three years.” The Scripture

also has that expression, that such an one dwelt (sedisse) in a city for such a time. Not meaning that he sat and never rose up? On this account the dwellings of men are called seats (sedes). Where people are seated (in this sense), are they always sitting? Is there no rising, no walking, no lying down? And yet they are called seats (sedes). In this way, then, believe an inhabiting of Christ on the right hand of God the Father: He is there. And let not your heart say to you, What is He doing? Do not want to seek what is not permitted to find: He is there; it suffices you. He is blessed, and from blessedness which is called the right hand of the Father, of very blessedness the name is, right hand of the Father. For if we shall take it carnally, then because He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, the Father will be on His left hand. Is it consistent with piety so to put Them together, the Son on the right, the Father on the left? There it is all right-hand, because no misery is there.

12. “Thence He shall come to judge the quick and dead.” The quick, who shall be alive and remain; the dead, who shall have gone before. It may also be understood thus: The living, the just; the dead, the unjust. For He judges both, rendering unto each his own. To the just He will say in the judgment, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” For this prepare yourselves, for these things hope, for this live, and so live, for this believe, for this be baptized, that it may be said to you, “Come ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” To them on the left hand, what? “Go into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” Thus will they be judged by Christ, the quick and the dead. We have spoken of Christ’s first nativity, which is without time; spoken of the other in the fullness of time, Christ’s nativity of the Virgin; spoken of the passion of Christ; spoken of the coming of Christ to judgment. The whole is spoken, that was to be spoken of Christ, God’s Only Son, our Lord. But not yet is the Trinity perfect.

13. It follows in the Creed, “And in the Holy Ghost.” This Trinity, one God, one nature, one substance, one power; highest equality, no division, no diversity, perpetual dearness of love. Would ye know the Holy Ghost, that He is God? Be baptized, and ye will be His temple. The Apostle says,

“Know ye not that your bodies are the temple within you of the Holy Ghost, Whom ye have of God?” A temple is for God: thus also Solomon, king and prophet, was bidden to build a temple for God. If he had built a temple for the sun or moon or some star or some angel, would not God condemn him? Because therefore he built a temple for God he showed that he worshipped God. And of what did he build? Of wood and stone, because God deigned to make unto Himself by His servant an house on earth, where He might be asked, where He might be had in mind. Of which blessed Stephen says, “Solomon built Him an house; howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made by hand.” If then our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, what manner of God is it that built a temple for the Holy Ghost? But it was God. For if our bodies be a temple of the Holy Ghost, the same built this temple for the Holy Ghost, that built our bodies. Listen to the Apostle saying, “God hath tempered the body, giving unto that which lacked the greater honor;” when he was speaking of the different members that there should be no schisms in the body. God created our body. The grass, God created; our body Who created? How do we prove that the grass is God’s creating? He that clothes, the same creates. Read the Gospel, “If then the grass of the fields,” saith it, “which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God so clotheth.” He, then, creates Who clothes. And the Apostle: “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but a bare grain, as perchance of wheat, or of some other corn; but God giveth it a body as He would, and to each one of seeds its proper body.” If then it be God that builds our bodies, God that builds our members, and our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, doubt not that the Holy Ghost is God. And do not add as it were a third God; because Father and Son and Holy Ghost is One God. So believe ye.

14. It follows after commendation of the Trinity, “The Holy Church.” God is pointed out, and His temple. “For the temple of God is holy,” says the Apostle, “which (temple) are ye.” This same is the holy Church, the one Church, the true Church, the catholic Church, fighting against all heresies: fight, it can: be fought down, it cannot. As for heresies, they went all out of it, like as unprofitable branches pruned from the vine: but itself abideth in

its root, in its Vine, in its charity. “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

15. “Forgiveness of sins.” Ye have [this article of] the Creed perfectly in you when ye receive Baptism. Let none say, “I have done this or that sin: perchance that is not forgiven me.” What hast thou done? How great a sin hast thou done? Name any heinous thing thou hast committed, heavy, horrible, which thou shudderest even to think of: have done what thou wilt: hast thou killed Christ? There is not than that deed any worse, because also than Christ there is nothing better. What a dreadful thing is it to kill Christ! Yet the Jews killed Him, and many afterwards believed on Him and drank His blood: they are forgiven the sin which they committed. When ye have been baptized, hold fast a good life in the commandments of God, that ye may guard your Baptism even unto the end. I do not tell you that ye will live here without sin; but they are venial, without which this life is not. For the sake of all sins was Baptism provided; for the sake of light sins, without which we cannot be, was prayer provided. What hath the Prayer? “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” Once for all we have washing in Baptism, every day we have washing in prayer. Only, do not commit those things for which ye must needs be separated from Christ’s body: which be far from you! For those whom ye have seen doing penance, have committed heinous things, either adulteries or some enormous crimes: for these they do penance. Because if theirs had been light sins, to blot out these daily prayer would suffice.

16. In three ways then are sins remitted in the Church; by Baptism, by prayer, by the greater humility of penance; yet God doth not remit sins but to the baptized. The very sins which He remits first, He remits not but to the baptized. When? when they are baptized. The sins which are after remitted upon prayer, upon penance, to whom He remits, it is to the baptized that He remitteth. For how can they say, “Our Father,” who are not yet born sons? The Catechumens, so long as they be such, have upon them all their sins. If Catechumens, how much more Pagans? how much more heretics? But to heretics we do not change their baptism. Why? because they have baptism in the same way as a deserter has the soldier’s mark: just so these also have Baptism; they have it, but to be condemned thereby, not crowned. And yet

if the deserter himself, being amended, begin to do duty as a soldier, does any man dare to change his mark?

17. We believe also “the resurrection of the flesh,” which went before in Christ: that the body too may have hope of that which went before in its Head. The Head of the Church, Christ: the Church, the body of Christ. Our Head is risen, ascended into heaven: where the Head, there also the members. In what way the resurrection of the flesh? Lest any should chance to think it like as Lazarus’s resurrection, that thou mayest know it to be not so, it is added, “Into life everlasting.” God regenerate you! God preserve and keep you! God bring you safe unto Himself, Who is the Life Everlasting. Amen.

# ON THE GOOD OF WIDOWHOOD

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

DE BONO VIDUITATIS.

TRANSLATED BY REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

This work is not mentioned in the *Retractations*, probably because it is a letter, and as such it is reckoned by Possidius, cap. 7. It is also marked as St. Augustin's by its references to his other works, *De Bono Conjugali*, etc. cap. 15. Ep. to Proba, cap. 23. The date is marked by the recent consecration of Demetrias, which was in 413. The admonition for which he is thanked by Juliana, Ep. 188, may be that against Pelagianism.

An objection has been raised from its disagreement with the fourth Council of Carthage, an. 398. can. 104, which excommunicates widows who marry again after consecration, and pronounces them guilty of adultery, whereas in cap. 10 and 11, the opinion that such marriages are no marriages, and that they ought to return to continence, is refuted. The two, however, are not wholly irreconcilable, as there may be a guilt similar to that of adultery incurred, and it may be visited with a censure in the form of excommunication, and yet the marriage may remain valid. The 16th Canon of Chalcedon imposes such a penalty, with power to the Bishop to relax it. —Abridged from the Benedictine Edition.

Augustin the Bishop, servant of Christ, and of the servants of Christ, unto the religious handmaiden of God, Juliana, in the Lord of lords health.

Not any longer to be in debt of my promise to your request and love in Christ, I have seized the occasion as I could, amid other my very pressing engagements, to write to you somewhat concerning the profession of holy widowhood, forasmuch as, when I was present, you laded me with entreaty, and, when I had not been able to deny you this, you often by letters demanded my promise. And in this work of ours, when you shall find in reading that some things pertain not at all unto your own person, or unto the person of you, who are living together in Christ, nor are strictly necessary to give counsel unto your life, it will be your duty not on this account to judge them superfluous. Forsooth this letter, although it be addressed to you, was not to be written for you alone; but certainly it was a matter for us not to neglect, that it should profit others also through your means. Whatsoever, therefore, you shall find here, such as either hath been at no time necessary for you, or is not so now, and which yet you shall perceive to be necessary for others, grieve not either to possess or to lend to read; that your charity also may be the profit of others.

2. Whereas, therefore, in every question, which relates to life and conduct, not only teaching, but exhortation also is necessary; in order that by teaching we may know what is to be done, and by exhortation may be incited not to think it irksome to do what we already know is to be done; what more can I teach you, than what we read in the Apostle? For holy Scripture setteth a rule to our teaching, that we dare not “be wise more than it behoveth to be wise;” but be wise, as himself saith, “unto soberness, according as unto each God hath allotted the measure of faith.” Be it not therefore for me to teach you any other thing, save to expound to you the words of the Teacher, and to treat of them as the Lord shall have given to me.

3. Therefore (thus) saith the Apostle, the teacher of the Gentiles, the vessel of election, “But I say unto the unmarried and the widows, that it is good for them, if they shall have so continued, even as I also.” These words are to be so understood, as that we think not that widows ought not to be called unmarried, in that they seem to have made trial of marriage: for by the name of unmarried women he means those, who are not now bound by marriage, whether they have been, or whether they have not been so. And



this in another place he opens, where he says, “Divided is a woman unmarried and a virgin.” Assuredly when he adds a virgin also, what would he have understood by an unmarried woman, but a widow? Whence also, in what follows, under the one term “unmarried” he embraces both professions, saying, “She who is unmarried is careful of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord: but she who is married is careful of the things of the world, how to please her husband.” Certainly by the unmarried he would have understood, not only her who hath never married, but her also, who, being by widowhood set free from the bond of marriage, hath ceased to be married; for on this account also he calleth not married, save her, who hath an husband; not her also, who hath had, and hath not. Wherefore every widow is unmarried; but, because not every unmarried woman is a widow, for there are virgins also; therefore he hath here set both, where he says, “But I say unto the unmarried and the widows;” as if he should say, What I say unto the unmarried, I say not unto them alone, who are virgins, but unto them also who are widows; “that it is good for them, if they shall have so continued, even as also I.”

4. Lo, there is your good compared to that good, which the Apostle calls his own, if faith be present: yea, rather, because faith is present. Short is this teaching, yet not on this account to be despised, because it is short; but on this account to be retained the more easily and the more dearly, in that in shortness it is not cheap. For it is not every kind of good soever, which the Apostle would here set forth, which he hath unambiguously placed above the faith of married women. But how great good the faith of married women, that is, of Christian and religious women joined in marriage, hath, may be understood from this, that, when he was giving charge for the avoiding of fornication, wherein assuredly he was addressing married persons also, he saith, “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?” So great then is the good of faithful marriage, that even the very members are (members) of Christ. But, forasmuch as the good of widowed continence is better than this good, the purpose of this profession is, not that a catholic widow be any thing more than a member of Christ, but that she have a better place, than a married woman, among the members of Christ. Forsooth the same Apostle says, “For, as in one body we have many members, but all members have not the same course of action; so being

many we are one body in Christ, and each members one of another: having gifts diverse according unto the grace, which hath been given unto us.”

5. Wherefore also when he was advising married persons not to defraud one another of the due of carnal intercourse; lest, by this means, the one of them, (the due of marriage being denied to him,) being through his own incontinence tempted of Satan, should fall away into fornication, he saith, “But this I say of leave, not of command; but I would that all men were as I myself; but each one hath his own proper gift from God; but one in this way, and another in that.” You see that wedded chastity also, and the marriage faith of the Christian bed, is a “gift,” and this of God; so that, when as carnal lust exceeds somewhat the measure of sensual intercourse, beyond what is necessary for the begetting of children, this evil is not of marriage, but venial by reason of the good of marriage. For not concerning marriage, which is contracted for the begetting of children, and the faith of wedded chastity, and the sacrament (indissoluble, so long as both live) of matrimony, all which are good; but concerning that immoderate use of the flesh, which is recognized in the weakness of married persons, and is pardoned by the intervention of the good of marriage, the Apostle saith, “I speak of leave, not of command.” Also, when he says, “The woman is bound, so long as her husband lives: but, in case her husband shall have died, she is set free: let her be married to whom she will, only in the Lord: but she shall be more blessed, if she shall have so continued, according to my counsel;” he shows sufficiently that a faithful woman is blessed in the Lord, even when she marries a second time after the death of her husband, but that a widow is more blessed in the same Lord; that is, to speak not only in the words, but by instances also, of the Scriptures, that Ruth is blessed, but that Anna is more blessed.

6. Wherefore this in the first place you ought to know, that by the good, which you have chosen, second marriages are not condemned, but are set in lower honor. For, even as the good of holy virginity, which thy daughter hath chosen, doth not condemn thy one marriage; so neither doth thy widowhood the second marriage of any. For hence, specially, the heresies of the Cataphryges and of the Novatians swelled, which Tertullian also, inflated with cheeks full of sound not of wisdom, whilst with railing tooth

he attacks second marriages, as though unlawful, which the Apostle with sober mind allows to be altogether lawful. From this soundness of doctrine let no man's reasoning, be he unlearned, or be he learned, move thee; nor do thou so extol thy own good, as to charge as evil that of another's which is not evil; but do thou rejoice so much the more of thy own good, the more thou seest, that, by it, not only are evils shunned, but some goods too surpassed. For adultery and fornication are evils. But from these unlawful things she is very far removed, who hath bound herself by liberty of vow, and, not by command of law, but by counsel of charity, hath brought to pass that even things lawful should not be lawful to her. And marriage chastity is a good, but widowed continence is a better good. Therefore this better good is honored by the submission of that other, not that other condemned by the praise of this that is better.

7. But whereas the Apostle, when commending the fruit of unmarried men and women, in that they have thought of the things of the Lord, how to please God, added and saith, "But this I say for your profit, not to cast a snare on you," that is, not to force you; "but in order to that which is honorable;" we ought not, because he saith that the good of the unmarried is honorable, therefore to think that the bond of marriage is base; otherwise we shall condemn first marriages also, which neither Cataphryges, nor Novatians, nor their most learned upholder Tertullian dared to call base. But as, when he says, "But I say unto the unmarried and widows, that it is good for them if they shall have so continued;" assuredly he set down "good" for "better," since every thing, which, when compared with a good, is called better, this also without doubt is a good; for what else is it that it is so called better, save that it is more good? and yet we do not on this account suppose him by consequence to have thought that it was an evil, in case they married, in that he said, "it is good for them, if they shall have so continued;" so also, when he says, "but in order to that which is honest," he hath not shown that marriage is base, but that which was honest than (another thing also) honest, he hath commended by the name of honest in general. Because what is honest, save what is more honest? But what is more honest is certainly honest. Forsooth he plainly showed that this is better than that other that is good, where he says, "Whoso giveth to marry, doeth well; but whoso giveth not to marry, doeth better." And this more

blessed than that other that is blessed, where he saith, “But she shall be more blessed, if she shall have so continued.” As, therefore, there is than good a better, and than blessed a more blessed, so is there than honest an honest, which he chose to call honest. For far be it that that be base, of which the Apostle Peter speaking saith, “Husbands, unto your wives, as unto the weaker and subject vessel, give honor, as unto co-heirs of grace;” and addressing the wives, he exhorts them, by the pattern of Sarah, to be subject unto their husbands; “For so,” saith he, “certain holy women, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, obeying their own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters ye are made, well-doing, and not fearing any disturbance.”

8. Whence, also, what the Apostle Paul said of the unmarried woman, “that she may be holy both in body and spirit;” we are not so to understand, as though a faithful woman being married and chaste, and according to the Scriptures subject unto her husband, be not holy in body, but only in spirit. For it cannot come to pass, that when the spirit is sanctified, the body also be not holy, of which the sanctified spirit maketh use: but, that we seem not to any to argue rather than to prove this by divine saying; since the Apostle Peter, making mention of Sarah, saith only “holy women,” and saith not, “and in body;” let us consider that saying of the same Paul, where forbidding fornication he saith, “Know ye not, that your bodies are members of Christ? Taking, therefore, members of Christ, shall I make them members of an harlot? Far be it.” Therefore let any one dare to say that the members of Christ are not holy; or let him not dare to separate from the members of Christ the bodies of the faithful that are married. Whence, also, a little after he saith, “Your body is the temple within you of the Holy Spirit, Whom ye have from God; and ye are not your own; for ye have been bought with a great price.” He saith that the body of the faithful is both members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit, wherein assuredly the faithful of both sexes are understood. There therefore are married women, there unmarried women also; but distinct in their deserts, and as members preferred to members, whilst yet neither are separated from the body. Whereas, therefore, he saith, speaking of an unmarried woman, “that she may be holy both in body and spirit,” he would have understood a fuller

sanctification both in body and in spirit, and hath not deprived the body of married women of all sanctification.

9. Learn, therefore, that thy good, yea, rather, remember what thou hast learned, that thy good is more praised, because there is another good than which this is better, than if this could not on any other condition be a good, unless that were an evil, or altogether were not. The eyes have great honor in the body, but they would have less, if they were alone, and there were not other members of less honor. In heaven itself the sun by its light surpasses, not chides, the moon; and star from star differs in glory, not is at variance through pride. Therefore, “God made all things, and, lo, very good;” not only “good,” but also “very;” for no other reason, than because “all.” For of each several work throughout it was also said, “God saw that it is good.” But, when “all” were named, “very” was added; and it was said, “God saw all things which He made, and, lo, very good.” For certain several things were better than other several, but all together better than any several. Therefore, may the sound doctrine of Christ make thee in His Body sound through His Grace, that, what thou hast better than others in body and spirit, the self-same thy spirit, which ruleth the body, may neither extol with insolence, nor distinguish with lack of knowledge.

10. Nor, because I called Ruth blessed, Anna more blessed, in that the former married twice, the latter, being soon widowed of her one husband, so lived long, do you straightway also think that you are better than Ruth. Forsooth different in the times of the Prophets was the dispensation of holy females, whom obedience, not lust, forced to marry, for the propagation of the people of God, that in them Prophets of Christ might be sent beforehand; whereas the People itself also, by those things which in figure happened among them, whether in the case of those who knew, or in the case of those who knew not those things, was nothing else than a Prophet of Christ, of whom should be born the Flesh also of Christ. In order therefore for the propagation of that people, he was accounted accursed by sentence of the Law, whoso raised not up seed in Israel. Whence also holy women were kindled, not by lust of sensual intercourse, but by piety of bearing; so that we most rightly believe of them that they would not have sought sensual intercourse, in case a family could have come by any other means.

And to the husbands was allowed the use of several wives living; and that the cause of this was not lust of the flesh, but forethought of begetting, is shown by the fact, that, as it was lawful for holy men to have several wives living, it was not likewise lawful for holy women to have intercourse with several husbands living; in that they would be by so much the baser, by how much the more they sought what would not add to their fruitfulness. Wherefore holy Ruth, not having seed such as at that time was necessary in Israel, on the death of her husband sought another of whom to have it. Therefore than this one twice married, Anna once married a widow was on this account more blessed, in that she attained also to be a prophetess of Christ; concerning whom we are to believe, that, although she had no sons, (which indeed Scripture by keeping silence hath left uncertain,) yet, had she by that Spirit foreseen that Christ would immediately come of a virgin, by Which she was enabled to recognize Him even as a child: whence, with good reason, even without sons, (that is, assuming she had none,) she refused a second marriage: in that she knew that now was the time wherein Christ were better served, not by duty of bearing, but by zeal of containing: not by fruitfulness of married womb, but by chastity of widowed conduct. But if Ruth also was aware that by her flesh was propagated a seed, whereof Christ should hereafter have flesh, and by marrying set forth her ministering to this knowledge, I dare not any longer say that the widowhood of Anna was more blessed than her fruitfulness.

11. But thou who both hast sons, and livest in that end of the world, wherein now is the time not of casting stones, but of gathering; not of embracing, but of abstaining from embracing; when the Apostle cries out, “But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remains, that both they who have wives be as not having;” assuredly if thou hadst sought a second marriage, it would have been no obedience of prophecy or law, no carnal desire even of family, but a mark of incontinence alone. For you would have done what the Apostle says, after he had said, “It is good for them, if they shall have so continued, even as I;” forsooth he straightway added, “But if they contain not themselves, let them marry; for I had rather that they marry than be burned.” For this he said, in order that the evil of unbridled desire might not be carried headlong into criminal baseness, being taken up by the honest estate of marriage. But thanks be to the Lord, in that thou hast given birth to

what thou wouldest not be, and the virginity of thy child hath compensated for the loss of thy virginity. For Christian doctrine, having diligent question made of it, makes answer, that a first marriage also now at this time is to be despised, unless incontinence stand in the way. For he, who said, "If they contain not themselves, let them marry," could have said, "If they have not sons, let them marry," if, when now after the Resurrection and Preaching of Christ, there is unto all nations so great and abundant supply of sons to be spiritually begotten, it were any such duty to beget sons after the flesh as it was in the first times. And, whereas in another place he saith, "But I will that the younger marry, bear children, be mothers of families," he commends with apostolic sobriety and authority the good of marriage, but doth not impose the duty of bearing, as though in order to obey the law, even on those who "receive" the good of continence. Lastly, why he had said this, he unfolds, when he adds and says, "To give no occasion of speaking evil to the adversary; for already certain have turned back after Satan:" that by these words of his we may understand, that those, whom he would have marry, could have done better to contain than marry; but better to marry than to go back after Satan, that is, to fall away from that excellent purpose of virginal or widowed chastity, by looking back to things that are behind, and perish. Wherefore, such as contain not themselves, let them marry before they make profession of continence, before they vow unto God, what, if they pay not, they are justly condemned. Forsooth in another place he saith of such, "For when they have lived in delights in Christ, they wish to marry: having condemnation, in that they have made of none effect their first faith;" that is, they have turned aside their will from the purpose of continence unto marriage. Forsooth they have made of none effect the faith, whereby they formerly vowed what they were unwilling by perseverance to fulfill. Therefore the good of marriage is indeed ever a good: but in the people of God it was at one time an act of obedience unto the law; now it is a remedy for weakness, but in certain a solace of human nature. Forsooth to be engaged in the getting of children, not after the fashion of dogs by promiscuous use of females, but by honest order of marriage, is not an affection such as we are to blame in a man; yet this affection itself the Christian mind, having thoughts of heavenly things, in a more praiseworthy manner surpasses and overcomes.

12. But since, as the Lord saith, “Not all receive this word;” therefore let her who can receive it, receive it; and let her, who containeth not, marry; let her, who hath not begun, deliberate; let her, who hath undertaken it, persevere; let there be no occasion given unto the adversary, let there be no oblation withdrawn from Christ. Forsooth in the marriage bond if chastity be preserved, condemnation is not feared; but in widowed and virginal continence, the excellence of a greater gift is sought for: and, when this has been sought, and chosen, and by debt of vow offered, from this time not only to enter upon marriage, but, although one be not married, to wish to marry is matter of condemnation. For, in order to show this, the Apostle saith not, “When they shall have lived in delights, in Christ” they marry; but “they wish to marry; having,” saith he, “condemnation, in that they have made of none effect their first faith,” although not by marrying, yet by wishing; not that the marriages even of such are judged matter of condemnation; but there is condemned a wrong done to purpose, there is condemned a broken faith of vow, there is condemned not a relief by lower good, but a fall from higher good: lastly, such are condemned, not because they have entered upon marriage faith afterwards, but because they have made of none effect the first faith of continence. And in order to suggest this in few words, the Apostle would not say, that they have condemnation, who after purpose of greater sanctity marry, (not because they are not condemned, but lest in them marriage itself should be thought to be condemned:) but, after he had said, “they wish to marry,” he straightway added, “having condemnation.” And he stated the reason, “in that they have made of none effect their former faith,” in order that it may appear that it is the will which fell away from its purpose, which is condemned, whether marriage follow, or fail to follow.

13. Wherefore they who say that the marriages of such are not marriages, but rather adulteries, seem not to me to consider with sufficient acuteness and care what they say; forsooth they, are misled by a semblance of truth. For, whereas they, who of Christian sanctity marry not, are said to choose the marriage of Christ, hence certain argue saying, If she, who during the life of her husband is married to another, be an adulteress, even as the Lord Himself hath laid down in the Gospel; therefore, during the life of Christ, over Whom death hath no more dominion, if she who had chosen His



marriage, be married to a man, she is an adulteress. They, who say this, are moved indeed with acuteness, but fail to observe, how great absurdity in fact follows on this reasoning. For whereas it is praiseworthy that, even during the life of her husband, by his consent, a female vow continence unto Christ, now, according to the reasoning of these persons, no one ought to do this, lest she make Christ Himself, what is impious to imagine, an adulterer, by being married to Him during the life of her husband. Next, whereas first marriages are of better desert than second, far be it that this be the thought of holy widows, that Christ seem unto them as a second husband. For Himself they used heretofore also to have, (when they were subject and did faithful service to their own husbands,) not after the flesh, but after the Spirit a Husband; unto Whom the Church herself, of which they are members, is the wife; who by soundness of faith, of hope, of charity, not in the virgins alone, but in widows also, and faithful married women, is altogether a virgin. Forsooth unto the universal Church, of which they all are members, the Apostle saith, "I joined you unto one husband a chaste virgin to present unto Christ." But He knoweth how to make fruitful, without marring of chastity, a wife a virgin, Whom even in the flesh itself His Mother could without violation of chastity conceive. But there is brought to pass by means of this ill-considered notion, (whereby they think that the marriages of women who have fallen away from this holy purpose, in case they shall have married, are no marriages,) no small evil, that wives be separated from their husbands, as though they were adulteresses, not wives; and wishing to restore to continence the women thus separated, they make their husbands real adulterers, in that during the life of their wives they have married others.

14. Wherefore I cannot indeed say, of females who have fallen away from a better purpose, in case they shall have married, that they are adulteries, not marriages; but I plainly would not hesitate to say, that departures and fallings away from a holier chastity, which is vowed unto the Lord, are worse than adulteries. For if, what may no way be doubted, it pertains unto an offense against Christ, when a member of Him keepeth not faith to her husband; how much graver offense is it against Him, when unto Himself faith is not kept, in a matter which He requires when offered, Who had not required that it should be offered. For when each fails to render that which,

not by force of command, but by advice of counsel, he vowed, by so much the more doth he increase the unrighteousness of the wrong done to his vow, by how much the less necessity he had to vow. These matters I for this reason treat of, that you may not think either that second marriages are criminal, or that any marriages whatsoever, being marriages, are an evil. Therefore let this be your mind, not that you condemn them, but that you despise them. Therefore the good of widowed chastity is becoming after a brighter fashion, in that in order to make vow and profession of it, females may despise what is both pleasing and lawful. But after profession of vow made they must continue to rein in, and overcome, what is pleasing, because it is no longer lawful.

15. Men are wont to move a question concerning a third or fourth marriage, and even more numerous marriages than this. On which to make answer strictly, I dare neither to condemn any marriage, nor to take from these the shame of their great number. But, lest the brevity of this my answer may chance to displease any, I am prepared to listen to my reprover treating more fully. For perhaps he alleges some reason, why second marriages be not condemned, but third be condemned. For I, as in the beginning of this discourse I gave warning, dare not to be more wise than it behoveth to be wise. For who am I, that I should think that that must be defined which I see that the Apostle hath not defined? For he saith, "A woman is bound, so long as her husband liveth." He said not, her first; or, second; or, third; or, fourth; but, "A woman," saith he, "is bound, so long as her husband liveth; but if her husband shall be dead, she is set free; let her be married to whom she will, only in the Lord: but she shall be more blessed, if she shall have so continued." I know not what can be added to, or taken from, this sentence, so far as relates to this matter. Next I hear Himself also, the Master and Lord of the Apostles and of us, answering the Sadducees, when they had proposed to Him a woman not once-married, or twice-married, but, if it can be said, seven-married, whose wife she should be in the resurrection? For rebuking them, He saith, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they shall neither be married, nor marry wives; for they shall not begin to die, but shall be equal to the Angels of God." Therefore He made mention of their resurrection, who shall rise again unto life, not who shall rise again unto punishment. Therefore He

might have said, Ye do err, knowing not the Scriptures, nor the power of God: for in that resurrection it will not be possible that there be those that were wives of many; and then added, that neither doth any there marry. But neither, as we see, did He in this sentence show any sign of condemning her who was the wife of so many husbands. Wherefore neither dare I, contrary to the feeling of natural shame, say, that, when her husbands are dead, a woman marry as often as she will; nor dare I, out of my own heart, beside the authority of holy Scripture, condemn any number of marriages whatever. But, what I say to a widow, who hath had one husband, this I say to every widow; you will be more blessed, if you shall have so continued.

16. For that also is no foolish question which is wont to be proposed, that whoso can may say, which widow is to be preferred in desert; whether one who hath had one husband, who, after having lived a considerable time with her husband, being left a widow with sons born to her and alive, hath made profession of continence; or she who as a young woman having lost two husbands within two years, having no children left alive to console her, hath vowed to God continence, and in it hath grown old with most enduring sanctity. Herein let them exercise themselves, if they can, by discussing, and by showing some proof to us, who weigh the merits of widows by number of husbands, not by the strength itself of continence. For, if they shall have said, that she who hath had one husband is to be preferred to her who hath had two; unless they shall have alleged some special reason or authority, they will assuredly be found to set before excellence of soul, not greater excellence of soul, but good fortune of the flesh. Forsooth it pertained unto good fortune of the flesh, both to live a long time with her husband, and to conceive sons. But, if they prefer her not on this account, that she had sons; at any rate the very fact that she lived a long time with her husband, what else was it than good fortune of the flesh? Further, the desert of Anna herself is herein chiefly commended, in that, after she had so soon buried her husband, through her protracted life she long contended with the flesh, and overcame. For so it is written, “And there was Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser; she was far advanced in many days; and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow even unto eighty-four years, who used not to depart from the Temple, by fastings and prayers serving day and

night.” You see how the holy widow is not only commended in this, that she had had one husband, but also, that she had lived few years with a husband from her virginity, and had with so great service of piety continued her office of widowed chastity even unto so great age.

17. Let us therefore set before our eyes three widows, each having one of the things, the whole of which were in her: let us suppose one who had had one husband, in whose case is wanting both so great length of widowhood, in that she hath lived long with her husband, and so great zeal of piety, in that she doth not so serve with fasts and prayers: a second, who after the very short life of her former husband, had quickly lost a second also, and is now long time a widow, but yet herself also doth not so set herself to the most religious service of fasts and prayers: a third, who not only hath had two husbands, but also hath lived long with each of them singly, or with one of them, and being left a widow at a later period of life, wherein indeed, in case she had wished to marry, she might also conceive sons, hath taken upon her widowed continence; but is more intent on God, more careful to do always the things that please Him, day and night, like Anna, serving by prayers and fasts. If a question be raised, which of these is to be preferred in deserts, who but must see that in this contest the palm must be given to the greater and, more glowing piety? So also if three others be set, in each of whom are two of those three, but one of the three in each wanting, who can doubt that they will be the better, who shall have in a more excellent manner in their two goods pious humility, in order that there may be lofty piety?

18. No one indeed of these six widows could come up to your standard. For you, in case that you shall have maintained this vow even unto old age, mayest have all the three things wherein the desert of Anna excelled. For both thou hast had one husband, and he lived not long with thee in the flesh; and, by this means, in case that thou shall show forth obedience to the words of the Apostle, saying, “But she who is a widow indeed and desolate, hath hoped in the Lord, and persevereth in prayers night and day,” and with sober watchfulness shall shun what follows, “But she who passes her time in delights, living is dead,” all those three goods, which were Anna’s, shall be thine also. But you have sons also, which haply she had not. And yet you

are not on this account to be praised, that you have them, but that you are zealous to nurture and educate them piously. For that they were born to thee, was of fruitfulness; that they are alive, is of good fortune; that they be so brought up, is of your will and disposal. In the former let men congratulate you, in this let them imitate you. Anna, through prophetic knowledge, recognized Christ with His virgin Mother; thee the grace of the Gospel hath made the mother of a virgin of Christ. Therefore that holy virgin, whom herself willing and seeking it ye have offered unto Christ, hath added something of virginal desert also unto the widowed deserts of her grandmother and mother. For ye who have her, fail not to have something thence; and in her ye are, what in yourselves ye are not. For that holy virginity should be taken from you at your marriage, was on this account brought to pass, in order that she should be born of you.

19. These discussions, therefore, concerning the different deserts of married women, and of different widows, I would not in this work enter upon, if, what I am writing unto you, I were writing only for you. But, since there are in this kind of discourse certain very difficult questions, it was my wish to say something more than what properly relates to you, by reason of certain, who seem not to themselves learned, unless they essay, not by passing judgment to discuss, but by rending to cut in pieces the labors of others: in the next place, that you yourself also may not only keep what you have vowed, and make advance in that good; but also know more carefully and more surely, that this same good of yours is not distinguished from the evil of marriage, but is set before the good of marriage. For let not such, as condemn the marriage of widowed females, although they exercise their continence in abstaining from many things, which you make use of, on this account lead you astray, to think what they think, although you cannot do what they do. For no one would be a madman, although he see that the strength of a madman is greater than of men in their sound senses. Chiefly, therefore, let sound doctrine both adorn and guard goodness of purpose. Forsooth it is from this cause that catholic females, even after that they have been married more than once, are by just judgment preferred, not only to the widows who have had one husband, but also to the virgins of heretics. There are indeed on these three matters, of marriage, widowhood, and virginity, many winding recesses of questions, many perplexities; and in

order by discussion to enter deeply into and solve these, there is required both greater care, and a fuller discourse; that either we may have a right mind in all those things, or, if in any matter we be otherwise minded, this also God may reveal unto us. However, what there also the Apostle saith next after, "Whereunto we have arrived, in that let us walk." But we have arrived, in what relates to this matter on which we are speaking, so far as to set continence before marriage, but holy virginity even before widowed continence; and not to condemn any marriages, which yet are not adulteries but marriages, by praise of any purpose whatever of our own or of our friends. Many other things on these matters we have said in a Book concerning the Good of Marriage, and in another Book concerning Holy Virginity, and in a Book which we composed with as great pains as we could against Faustus the Manichee; since, by most biting reproaches in his writings of the chaste marriages of Patriarchs and Prophets, he had turned aside the minds of certain unlearned persons from soundness of faith.

20. Wherefore, forasmuch as in the beginning of this little work I had proposed certain two necessary matters, and had undertaken to follow them out; one which related to doctrine, the other to exhortation; and I have not failed in the former part, to the best of my power, according to the business which I had undertaken; let us come to exhortation, in order that the good which is known wisely, may be pursued ardently. And in this matter I give you this advice first, that, how great soever love of pious continence you feel to be in you, you ascribe it to the favor of God, and give Him thanks, Who of His Holy Spirit hath freely given unto you so much, as that, His love being shed abroad in your heart, the love of a better good should take away from you the permission of a lawful matter. For it was His gift to you that you should not wish to marry, when it was lawful, in order that now it should not be lawful, even if you wished; and that by this means the wish not to do it might be the more settled, lest what were now unlawful be done, which was not done even when lawful; and that, a widow of Christ, you should so far attain as to see your daughter also a virgin of Christ; for whilst you are praying as Anna, she hath become what Mary was. These by how much the more you know them to be gifts of God, by so much the more are you by the same gifts blessed; yea, rather, you are not so otherwise than as you know from Whom you have what you have. For listen to what the

Apostle said on this matter, “But we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit Which is of God, that we may know what things have been given to us by God.” Forsooth many have many gifts of God, and by not knowing from Whom they have them, come to boast themselves with impious vanity. But there is no one blessed with the gifts of God, who is ungrateful to the Giver. Forasmuch as, also, whereas in the course of the sacred Mysteries we are bidden to “lift up our hearts,” it is by His help that we are able, by Whose bidding we are admonished; and therefore it follows, that, of this so great good of the heart lifted up, we give not the glory to ourselves as of our own strength, but render thanks unto our Lord God. For of this we are straightway admonished, that “this is meet,” “this is right.” You remember whence these words are taken, you recognize by what sanction, and by how great holiness they are commended within. Therefore hold and have what you have received, and return thanks to the Giver. For, although it be yours to receive and have, yet you have that, which you have received; forasmuch as to one waxing proud, and impiously glorying of that which he had, as though he had it of himself, the Truth saith by the Apostle, “But what hast thou, which thou hast not received? But, if thou hast received, why boastest thou, as if thou hadst not received?”

21. These things I am compelled to admonish by reason of certain little discourses of some men, that are to be shunned and avoided, which have begun to steal through the ears unto the minds of many, being (as must be said with tears) hostile to the grace of Christ, which go to persuade that we count not as necessary for us prayer unto the Lord, that we enter not into temptation. For they so essay to defend the free will of man, as that by it alone, even without help of the grace of God, we are able to fulfill what is commanded us of God. And thus it follows, that the Lord in vain said, “Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation;” and in vain daily in the Lord’s Prayer itself we say, “Lead us not into temptation.” For if it is of our own power alone that we be not overcome by temptation, why do we pray that we enter not, nor be led into it? Rather let us do what is of our own free will, and most absolute power; and let us mock at the Apostle, saying, “God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able;” and let us oppose him, and say, Why seek I of the Lord, what He hath set in my own power? But far be it, that he be so minded, who is sound minded.

Wherefore let us seek that He may give, what He bids us that we have. For to this end He bids us have this, which as yet we have not, to admonish as what to seek; and that when we shall have found the power to do what He hath bidden, we may understand, of this also, whence we have received it; lest, being puffed and lifted up by the spirit of this world, we know not what things have been given unto us of God. Wherefore the free choice of the human will we by no means destroy, when the Grace of God, by which the free choice itself is helped, we deny not with ungrateful pride, but rather set forth with grateful piety. For it is ours to will: but the will itself is both admonished that it may arise, and healed, that it may have power; and enlarged, that it may receive; and filled, that it may have. For were not we to will, certainly neither should we receive the things that are given, nor should we have. For who would have continence, (among the rest of the gifts of God to speak of this rather, of which I am speaking to you,) who, I say, would have continence, unless willing? forasmuch as also no one would receive unless willing. But if you ask, Whose gift it is, that it can be by our will received and had? listen to Scripture; yea, rather, because thou knowest, recollect what thou hast read, “Whereas I knew,” saith he, “that no one can be continent, unless God give it, and this itself was of wisdom, to know whose gift it was.” Great are these two gifts, wisdom and continence; wisdom, forsooth, whereby we are formed in the knowledge of God; but continence, whereby we are not conformed unto this world. But God bids us that we be both wise and continent, without which goods we cannot be just and perfect. But let us pray that He give what He bids, by helping and inspiring, Who hath admonished us what to will by commanding and calling. Whatsoever of this He hath given, let us pray that He preserve; but what He hath not given as yet, let us pray that He supply; yet let us pray and give thanks for what we have received; and for what we have not yet received, from the very fact that we are not ungrateful for what we have received, let us trust that we shall receive it. For He, Who hath given power unto the faithful who are married to contain from adulteries and fornications, Himself hath given unto holy virgins and widows to contain from all sexual intercourse; in the case of which virtue now the term inviolate chastity or continence is properly used. Or is it haply that from Him indeed we have received continence, but from ourselves have wisdom? What then is it that the Apostle James saith, “But if any of you lack



wisdom, let him ask of God, Who giveth unto all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given unto him.” But on this question, already in other little works of ours, so far as the Lord hath helped us, we have said many things; and at other times, so far as through Him we shall be able, when opportunity is given, we will speak.

22. Now it has been my wish on this account to say something on this subject, by reason of certain of our brethren most friendly and dear to us, and without willful guilt indeed entangled in this error, but yet entangled; who think, that, when they exhort any to righteousness and piety, their exhortation will not have force, unless the whole of that, wherein they would work upon man that man should work, they set in the power of man, not helped by the grace of God, but put forth by the alone choice of the free will; as though there can be free will to perform a good work, unless set free by the gift of God! And they mark not that this very thing themselves also have by the gift of God, that with such power they exhort, as to excite the dull wills of men to enter upon a good life, to enkindle the cold, to correct such as are in error, to convert such as are turned aside, to pacify such as are opposed. For thus they are able to succeed in persuading what they would persuade to, or if they work not these things in the wills of men, what is their work? wherefore speak they? Let them leave them rather to their own choice. But if in them they work these things, what? I pray, doth man, in the will of man, work so great things by speaking, and doth God work nothing there by helping? Yea rather, with how great soever power of discourse man may prevail, as that by skill of discussion, and sweetness of speech, he in the will of man implant truth, nourish charity, by teaching remove error, by exhortation remove sloth, “Neither he who planteth is any thing, nor he who watereth, but God Who giveth the increase.” For in vain would the workman use all means without, unless the Creator should work secretly within. I hope therefore that this letter of mine by the worthy deed of your Excellence will soon come into the hands of such also; on this account I thought that I ought to say something on this subject. Next that both you yourself, and whatsoever other widows shall read this, or hear it read, may know that you make more advance unto the love and profession of the good of continence by your own prayers than by our exhortations; forasmuch as if it be any help to you that our addresses also are supplied to

you, the whole must be assigned to His grace, “in Whose Hand,” as it is written, “are both we and our discourses.”

23. If, therefore, you had not as yet vowed unto God widowed continence, we would assuredly exhort you to vow it; but, in that you have already vowed it, we exhort you to persevere. And yet I see that I must so speak as to lead those also who had as yet thought of marriage to love it and to seize on it. Therefore let us give ear unto the Apostle, “She who is unmarried,” saith he, “is careful about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit; but she who is married is careful about the things of the world, how to please her husband.” He saith not, is careful about the things of the world, so as not to be holy; but certainly that that marriage holiness is less, in regard of that portion of cares, which hath thought of the pleasure of the world. Whatever, therefore, I of earnest purpose of mind would be expended also on these things whereby she would have to please a husband, the unmarried Christian woman ought in a certain way to gather and bring together unto that earnest purpose whereby she is to please the Lord. And consider, Whom she pleases, who pleases the Lord; and assuredly she is by so much the more blessed by how much the more she pleases Him; but by how much the more her thoughts are of the things of the world, by so much the less does she please Him. Therefore do ye with all earnest purpose please Him, Who is “fair of form above the sons of men.” For that ye please Him, it is by His grace which is “shed abroad on His lips.” Please ye Him in that portion of thought also, which would be occupied by the world, in order to please a husband. Please ye Him, Who displeased the world, in order that such as please Him might be set free from the world. For This One, fair of form above the sons of men, men saw on the Cross of the Passion; “and He had not form or beauty, but His face cast down, and His posture unseemly.” Yet from this unseemliness of your Redeemer flowed the price of your beauty, but of a beauty within, for “all the beauty of the King’s daughter is within.” By this beauty please ye Him, this beauty order ye with studious care and anxious thought. He loves not dyes of deceits; the Truth delighteth in things that are true, and He, if you recognize what you have read, is called the Truth. “I am,” saith He, “the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” Run ye to Him through Him, please ye Him of Him; live ye with

Him, in Him, of Him. With true affections and holiest chastity love ye to be loved by such a Husband.

24. Let the inner ear of the virgin also, thy holy child, hear these things. I shall see how far she goes before you in the Kingdom of That King: it is another question. Yet ye have found, mother and daughter, Him, Whom by beauty of chastity ye ought to please together, having despised, she all, you second, marriage. Certainly if there were husbands whom ye had to please, by this time, perhaps, you would feel ashamed to adorn yourself together with your daughter; now let it not shame you, to set yourselves to do what may adorn you both together; because it is not matter of blame, but of glory, that ye be loved both together by That One. But white and red, feigned and laid on with paints, ye would not use, even if ye had husbands; not thinking that they were fit persons for you to deceive, or yourselves such as ought to deceive; now therefore That King, Who had longed for the beauty of His Only Spouse, of Whom ye are members, do ye with all truth together please, together cleave unto; she with virginal chastity, you with widowed continence, both with spiritual beauty. In which beauty also her grandmother, and your mother-in-law, who by this time surely hath grown old, is beautiful together with you. Forsooth whilst charity carries the vigor of this beauty into things that are before, length of years causeth not in it a wrinkle. You have with you a holy aged woman, both in your house and in Christ, whom to consult concerning perseverance; how you are to fight with this or that temptation, what you are to do, that it may be the more easily overcome; what safeguard you are to take, that it may not easily again lay wait; and if there be any thing of this sort, she teaches you, who is now by time fixed, by love a well-wisher, by natural affection full of cares, by age secure. Do you specially, do you in such things consult her, who hath made trial of what you have made trial of. For your child sings that song, which in the Apocalypse none save virgins can sing. But for both of you she prays more carefully than for herself, but she is more full of care for her granddaughter, for whom there remains a longer space of years to overcome temptations; but you she sees nearer to her own age, and mother of a daughter of such an age, as that, had you seen her married, (which now is not lawful, and far be it from her,) I think you would have blushed to bear children together with her. How much then is it that now remains to you of

a dangerous age, who are on this account not called a grandmother, in order that together with your daughter you may be fruitful in offspring of holy thoughts and works? Therefore not without reason is the grandmother more full of care for her, for whom you also the mother; because both what she hath vowed is greater, and the whole of what she hath just now begun remains to her. May the Lord hear her prayers, that ye may holily follow her good deserts, Who in youth gave birth to the flesh of your husband, in old age travaileth with the heart of your daughter. Therefore do ye all, alike and with one accord, by conduct please, by prayers press upon, That One Husband of One Wife, in Whose Body by One Spirit ye are living.

25. The past day returns not hereafter, and after yesterday proceeds to-day, and after to-day will proceed to-morrow; and, lo, all times and the things of time pass away, that there may come the promise that shall abide; and “whoso shall have persevered even unto the end, this one shall be saved.” If the world is now perishing, the married woman, for whom beareth she? Or in heart about to bear, and in flesh not about to bear, why doth she marry? But if the world is still about to last, why is not He more loved, by Whom the world was made? If already enticements of this life are failing, there is not any thing for a Christian soul with desire to seek after; but if they shall yet remain, there is what with holiness he may despise. For the one of these two there is no hope of lust, in the other greater glory of charity. How many or how long are the very years, in which the flower of carnal age seems to flourish? Some females having thoughts of marriage, and with ardor wishing it, whilst they are being despised or put off, on a sudden have grown old, so as that now they would feel shame, rather than desire, to marry. But many having married, their husbands having set out into distant countries very soon after their union, have grown aged expecting their return, and, as though soon left widows, at times have not even attained so as at least as old women to receive their old men on their return. If therefore, when betrothed bridegrooms despised or delayed, or when husbands were abroad, carnal desire could be restrained from commission of fornication or adultery, why cannot it be restrained from commission of sacrilege? If it hath been repressed, when being deferred it was glowing, why is it not put down, when having been cut off it had grown cold? For they in greater measure endure glowing of desire, who despair not of the

pleasure of the same desire. But whoso of unmarried persons vow chastity to God, withdraw that very hope, which is the fuel of love. Hence with more ease is desire bridled, which is kindled by no expectation; and yet, unless against this prayer be made, in order to overcome it, itself as unlawful is the more ardently wished for.

26. Therefore let spiritual delights succeed to the place of carnal delights in holy chastity; reading, prayer, psalm, good thought, frequency in good works, hope of the world to come, and a heart upward; and for all these giving of thanks unto the Father of lights, from Whom, without any doubt, every good gift, and every perfect gift, as Scripture bears witness, cometh down. For when, in stead of the delights of married women, which they have in the flesh of their husbands, the use of other carnal delights is taken, as it were to solace them, why should I speak of the evils which follow, when the Apostle hath said in short, that the widow, who lives in delights, living is dead. But far be it from you, that ye be taken with lust of riches instead of lust of marriage, or that in your hearts money succeed to the place of love of a husband. For looking into men's conversation, we have often found by experience, that in certain persons, when wantonness hath been restrained, avarice hath increased. For, as, in the senses themselves of the body, they who see not hear more keenly, and discern many things by touch, nor have such as have the use of their eyes so great life in their touch; and in this instance it is understood that, when the exertion of the power of attention hath been restrained in one approach, that is, of the eyes, it puts itself forth into other senses, more ready with keenness to distinguish, as though it essayed to supply from the one what was denied in the other; thus also often carnal lust, being restrained from pleasure of sensual intercourse, with greater strength reaches itself forth to desire money, and when turned away from the one, turns itself with more glow of passion to the other. But in you let the love of riches grow cold together with the love of marriage, and let a pious use of what property you possess be directed to spiritual delights, that your liberality wax warm rather in helping such as are in want than in enriching covetous persons. Forsooth into the heavenly treasury are sent not gifts to the covetous, but alms to the needy, which above measure help the prayers of widows. Fastings, also, and watchings, so far as they disturb not health, if they be spent in praying,

singing psalms, reading, and meditating in the Law of God, even the very things which seem laborious are turned into spiritual delights. For no way burdensome are the labors of such as love, but even of themselves delight, as of such as hunt, fowl, fish, gather grapes, traffic, delight themselves with some game. It matters therefore what be loved. For, in the case of what is loved, either there is no labor, or the labor also is loved. And consider how it should be matter for shame and grief, if there be pleasure in labor, to take a wild beast, to fill cask and purse, to cast a ball, and there be no pleasure in labors to win God!

27. Indeed in all spiritual delights, which unmarried women enjoy, their holy conversation ought also to be with caution; lest haply, though their life be not evil through haughtiness, their report be evil through negligence. Nor are they to be listened to, whether they be holy men or women, when (upon occasion of their neglect in some matter being blamed, through which it comes to pass that they fall into evil suspicion, from which they know that their life is far removed) they say that it is enough for them their conscience before God, despising what men think of them, not only imprudently but also cruelly; when they slay the souls of others; whether of such as blaspheme the way of God, who following their suspicion are displeased at what is the chaste life of the Saints, as though it were shameful, or of such also as make excuse, and imitate, not what they see, but what they think. Wherefore whosoever guards his life from charges of shameful and evil deeds, does good to himself; but whosoever guards his character too, is merciful also towards others. For unto ourselves our own life is necessary, unto others our character; and certainly even what we mercifully minister unto others, for their health, abounds also to our own profit. Whence not in vain the Apostle, "We provide good things," saith he, "not only before God, but also before men;" also he saith, "Please ye all men through all things; even as I also please all men through all things, not seeking what is of profit unto myself, but what unto many, that they may be saved." Also in a certain exhortation he says, "For the rest, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are most dear, whatsoever things are of good report; if any virtue, if any praise, these things think on, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me." You see how among

many things, unto which by exhortation he admonished them, he neglected not to set, “whatsoever things are of good report;” and in two words included all things, where he saith, “if any virtue, if any praise.” For unto virtue pertain the good things of which He made mention above; but good report unto praise. I think that the Apostle took not the praise of men for any great thing, saying in another place, “But to me it is the least thing, that I be judged of you, or of day of man;” and in another place, “If I were pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ;” and again, “For our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience.” But of these two, that is, of a good life, and a good report, or as is said more shortly, of virtue and praise, the one for his own sake he most wisely kept, the other for the sake of others he most mercifully provided. But, forasmuch as human caution, how great soever, cannot on every side avoid most malevolent suspicions, when for our good report we shall have done whatever we rightly can, if any, either by falsely pretending evil things of us, or from believing evil of us, endeavor to stain our fair fame, let there be present the solace of conscience, and clearly also the joy, in that our reward is great in Heaven, even when men say many evil things of us, and we yet live godly and righteously. For that reward is as the pay of such as serve as soldiers, through the arms of righteousness, not only on the right hand, but on the left also; that is to say, through glory and mean estate, through ill report and good report.

28. Go on therefore in your course, and run with perseverance, in order that ye may obtain; and by pattern of life, and discourse of exhortation, carry away with you into this same your course, whomsoever ye shall have had power. Let there not bend you from this earnest purpose, whereby ye excite many to follow, the complaint of vain persons, who say, How shall the human race subsist, if all shall have been continent? As though it were for any other reason that this world is delayed, save that the predestined number of the Saints be fulfilled, and were this the sooner fulfilled, assuredly the end of the world would not be put off. Nor let it stay you from your earnest purpose of persuading others to the same good ye have, if it be said to you, Whereas marriage also is good, how shall there be all goods in the Body of Christ, both the greater, forsooth, and the lesser, if all through praise and love of continence imitate? In the first place, because with the

endeavor that all be continent, there will still be but few, for “not all receive this word.” But forasmuch as it is written, “Whoso can receive, let him receive;” then do they receive who can, when silence is not kept even toward those who cannot. Next, neither ought we to fear lest haply all receive it, and some one of lesser goods, that is, married life, be wanting in the body of Christ. For if all shall have heard, and all shall have received, we ought to understand that this very thing was predestinated, that married goods already suffice in the number of those members which so many have passed out of this life. For neither now, if all shall have been continent, will they give the honor of the continent to those who have already borne into the garners of the Lord the fruit thirty-fold, if that be understood of married good. Therefore all these goods will have there their place, although from this time no woman wish to be married, no man wish to marry a wife. Therefore without anxiety urge on whom ye can, to become what ye are; and pray with watchfulness and fervor, that by the help of the Right Hand of the Most High, and by the abundance of the most merciful grace of the Lord, ye may both persevere in that which ye are, and may make advances unto that which ye shall be.

29. Next I entreat you, by Him, from Whom ye have both received this gift, and hope for the rewards of this gift, that ye be mindful to set me also in your prayers with all your household Church. Forsooth it hath come to pass in most proper order, that I should write unto your Mother now aged a letter concerning prayer; unto her, forsooth, it chiefly pertains by praying to contend on your behalf, who is less full of care for herself than for you; and that for you rather than for her I should compose this little work concerning widowed continence; because unto you it remaineth to overcome, what her age hath already overcome. But the holy virgin your child, if she desire aught concerning her profession from our labors, she hath a large book on Holy Virginitie to read. Concerning the reading of which I had also admonished you, forasmuch as it contains many things necessary unto either chastity, that is, virginal and widowed, which things on this account I have here partly touched on lightly, partly altogether passed over, because I there discussed them more fully.

May you persevere in the grace of Christ.



# ON THE GOOD OF MARRIAGE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

DE BONO CONJUGALI.

TRANSLATED BY REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

This treatise, and the following, were written against somewhat that still remained of the heresy of Jovinian. S. Aug. mentions this error in b. ii. c. 23, de Nuptiis et Conc. “Jovinianus,” he says, “who a few years since tried to found a new heresy, said that the Catholics favored the Manichaeans, because in opposition to him they preferred holy Virginity to Marriage.” And in his book on Heresies, c. 82. “That heresy took its rise from one Jovinianus, a Monk, in our own time, when we were yet young.” And he adds that it was soon overborne and extinguished, say about A.D. 390, having been condemned first at Rome, then at Milan. There are letters of Pope Siricius on the subject to the Church of Milan, and the answer sent him by the Synod of Milan, at which St. Ambrose presided. Jerome had refuted Jovinian, but was said to have attempted the defense of the excellency of the virgin state, at the expense of condemning marriage. That Augustin might not be subject to any such complaint or calumny, before speaking of the superiority of Virginity, he thought it well to write on the Good of Marriage.

This work we learn to have been finished about the year 401, not only from the order of his Retractations, but also from his books on Genesis after the Letter, begun about that year. For in b. ix. on Genesis, c. 7, where he commends the Good of Marriage, he says: “Now this is threefold,

faithfulness, offspring, and the Sacrament. For faithfulness, it is observed, that there be no lying with other man or woman, out of the bond of wedlock: for the offspring, that it be lovingly welcomed, kindly nourished, religiously brought up: for the Sacrament, that marriage be not severed, and that man or woman divorced be not joined to another even for the sake of offspring. This is as it were the rule of Marriages by which rule either fruitfulness is made seemly, or the perverseness of incontinence is brought to order. Upon which since we have sufficiently discoursed in that book, which we lately published, on the Good of Marriage, where we have also distinguished the Widow's continence and the Virgin's excellency, according to the worthiness of their degrees, our pen is not to be now longer occupied." This very work is referred to in Book I. on the Deserts and Remission of Sins, c. 29.—Bened. Ed.

#### NOTICE.

The Editors are, of course, aware of the danger there is in reading a treatise like the following in a spirit of idle curiosity, and they beg any reader who has not well assured himself that his aim is right and holy to abstain from perusing it. At the same time it must not be forgotten, that something far other than a mere shrinking from subjects offensive to modern delicacy is needed, in order to purify the thoughts with respect to the holy estate of Matrimony. The mind that will but seriously attend to it in that light, will certainly be strengthened against evil suggestions by seeing in the whole subject a field of Christian duty.

It seemed further requisite to bring forward a work calculated to remove the imputation so falsely cast on the holy Fathers, that they regarded Matrimony as unholy, and almost agreed with the Manichean view of it, as a defilement and degradation to the Christian. They did, it is true, prefer Virginity to Marriage, but as St. Augustin expressly states, as the "better of two good things," not as though one were good, and the other evil.

In estimating the work and the writer, the age in which it was written must be kept in view, and what that age required must not be imputed as a fault to him or to his religion. And perhaps what was written for another age may serve the more safely towards our improvement and guidance from the very

circumstance that the style and manner of antiquity has become a kind of veil, which takes off somewhat from the strength and vividness of first impressions, and leaves the mind more at liberty to use what is laid before it as it will, than a more modern way of speaking would be likely to do. Let that liberty be used rightly and conscientiously, and the effect of reading will be good.—Eds. of the Oxford Library.

1. Forasmuch as each man is a part of the human race, and human nature is something social, and hath for a great and natural good, the power also of friendship; on this account God willed to create all men out of one, in order that they might be held in their society not only by likeness of kind, but also by bond of kindred. Therefore the first natural bond of human society is man and wife. Nor did God create these each by himself, and join them together as alien by birth: but He created the one out of the other, setting a sign also of the power of the union in the side, whence she was drawn, was formed. For they are joined one to another side by side, who walk together, and look together whither they walk. Then follows the connexion of fellowship in children, which is the one alone worthy fruit, not of the union of male and female, but of the sexual intercourse. For it were possible that there should exist in either sex, even without such intercourse, a certain friendly and true union of the one ruling, and the other obeying.

2. Nor is it now necessary that we enquire, and put forth a definite opinion on that question, whence could exist the progeny of the first men, whom God had blessed, saying, “Increase, and be ye multiplied, and fill the earth;” if they had not sinned, whereas their bodies by sinning deserved the condition of death, and there can be no sexual intercourse save of mortal bodies. For there have existed several and different opinions on this matter; and if we must examine, which of them be rather agreeable to the truth of Divine Scriptures, there is matter for a lengthened discussion. Whether, therefore, without intercourse, in some other way, had they not sinned, they would have had sons, from the gift of the Almighty Creator, Who was able to create themselves also without parents, Who was able to form the Flesh of Christ in a virgin womb, and (to speak even to unbelievers themselves) Who was able to bestow on bees a progeny without sexual intercourse; or whether many things there were spoken by way of mystery and figure, and

we are to understand in another sense what is written, “Fill the earth, and rule over it;” that is, that it should come to pass by fullness and perfection of life and power, so that the very increase and multiplication, whereby it is said, “Increase, and be ye multiplied,” be understood to be by advance of mind, and abundance of virtue, as it is set in the Psalm, “Thou shall multiply me in my soul by virtue;” and that succession of progeny was not given unto man, save after that, by reason of sin, there was to be hereafter departure in death: or whether the body was not made spiritual in the case of these men, but at the first animal, in order that by merit of obedience it might after become spiritual, to lay hold of immortality, not after death, which by the malice of the devil entered into the world, and was made the punishment of sin; but after that change, which the Apostle signifies, when he says, “Then we living, who remain, together with them, shall be caught up in the clouds, to meet Christ, into the air,” that we may understand both that those bodies of the first pair were mortal, in the first forming, and yet that they would not have died, had they not sinned, as God had threatened: even as if He should threaten a wound, in that the body was capable of wounds; which yet would not have happened, unless what He had forbidden were done. Thus, therefore, even through sexual intercourse there might take place generations of such bodies, as up to a certain point should have increase, and yet should not pass into old age; or even into old age, and yet not into death; until the earth were filled with that multiplication of the blessing. For if to the garments of the Israelites God granted their proper state without any wearing away during forty years, how much more would He grant unto the bodies of such as obeyed His command a certain most happy temperament of sure state, until they should be changed for the better, not by death of the man, whereby the body is abandoned by the soul, but by a blessed change from mortality to immortality, from an animal to a spiritual quality. Of these opinions which be true, or whether some other or others yet may be formed out of these words, were a long matter to enquire and discuss.

3. This we now say, that, according to this condition of being born and dying, which we know, and in which we have been created, the marriage of male and female is some good; the compact whereof divine Scripture so commends, as that neither is it allowed one put away by her husband to

marry, so long as her husband lives: nor is it allowed one put away by his wife to marry another, unless she who have separated from him be dead. Therefore, concerning the good of marriage, which the Lord also confirmed in the Gospel, not only in that He forbade to put away a wife, save because of fornication, but also in that He came by invitation to a marriage, there is good ground to inquire for what reason it be a good. And this seems not to me to be merely on account of the begetting of children, but also on account of the natural society itself in a difference of sex. Otherwise it would not any longer be called marriage in the case of old persons, especially if either they had lost sons, or had given birth to none. But now in good, although aged, marriage, albeit there hath withered away the glow of full age between male and female, yet there lives in full vigor the order of charity between husband and wife: because, the better they are, the earlier they have begun by mutual consent to contain from sexual intercourse with each other: not that it should be matter of necessity afterwards not to have power to do what they would, but that it should be matter of praise to have been unwilling at the first, to do what they had power to do. If therefore there be kept good faith of honor, and of services mutually due from either sex, although the members of either be languishing and almost corpse-like, yet of souls duly joined together, the chastity continues, the purer by how much it is the more proved, the safer, by how much it is the calmer. Marriages have this good also, that carnal or youthful incontinence, although it be faulty, is brought unto an honest use in the begetting of children, in order that out of the evil of lust the marriage union may bring to pass some good. Next, in that the lust of the flesh is repressed, and rages in a way more modestly, being tempered by parental affection. For there is interposed a certain gravity of glowing pleasure, when in that wherein husband and wife cleave to one another, they have in mind that they be father and mother.

4. There is this further, that in that very debt which married persons pay one to another, even if they demand it with somewhat too great intemperance and incontinence, yet they owe faith alike one to another. Unto which faith the Apostle allows so great right, as to call it “power,” saying, “The woman hath not power of her own body, but the man; again in like manner also the man hath not power of his own body, but the woman.” But the violation of this faith is called adultery, when either by instigation of one’s own lust, or

by consent of lust of another, there is sexual intercourse on either side with another against the marriage compact: and thus faith is broken, which, even in things that are of the body, and mean, is a great good of the soul: and therefore it is certain that it ought to be preferred even to the health of the body, wherein even this life of ours is contained. For, although a little chaff in comparison of much gold is almost nothing; yet faith, when it is kept pure in a matter of chaff, as in gold, is not therefore less because it is kept in a lesser matter. But when faith is employed to commit sin, it were strange that we should have to call it faith; however of what kind soever it be, if also the deed be done against it, it is the worse done; save when it is on this account abandoned, that there may be a return unto true and lawful faith, that is, that sin may be amended, by correction of perverseness of the will. As if any, being unable alone to rob a man, should find a partner in his iniquity, and make an agreement with him to do it together, and to divide the spoil; and, after the crime hath been committed, should take off the whole to himself alone. That other grieves and complains that faith hath not been kept with him, but in his very complaint he ought to consider, that he himself rather ought to have kept faith with human society in a good life, and not to make unjust spoil of a man, if he feels with how great injustice it hath failed to be kept with himself in a fellowship of sin. Forsooth the former, being faithless in both instances, must assuredly be judged the more wicked. But, if he had been displeased at what they had done ill, and had been on this account unwilling to divide the spoil with his partner in crime, in order that it might be restored to the man, from whom it had been taken, not even a faithless man would call him faithless. Thus a woman, if, having broken her marriage faith, she keep faith with her adulterer, is certainly evil: but, if not even with her adulterer, worse. Further, if she repent her of her sin, and returning to marriage chastity, renounce all adulterous compacts and resolutions, I count it strange if even the adulterer himself will think her one who breaks faith.

5. Also the question is wont to be asked, when a male and female, neither the one the husband, nor the other the wife, of any other, come together, not for the begetting of children, but, by reason of incontinence, for the mere sexual intercourse, there being between them this faith, that neither he do it with any other woman, nor she with any other man, whether it is to be

called marriage. And perhaps this may, not without reason, be called marriage, if it shall be the resolution of both parties until the death of one, and if the begetting of children, although they came not together for that cause, yet they shun not, so as either to be unwilling to have children born to them, or even by some evil work to use means that they be not born. But, if either both, or one, of these be wanting, I find not how we can call it marriage. For, if a man should take unto him any one for a time, until he find another worthy either of his honors or of his means, to marry as his compeer; in his soul itself he is an adulterer, and that not with her whom he is desirous of finding, but with her, with whom he so lies, as not to have with her the partnership of a husband. Whence she also herself, knowing and willing this, certainly acts unchastely in having intercourse with him, with whom she has not the compact of a wife. However, if she keep to him faith of bed, and after he shall have married, have no thought of marriage herself, and prepare to contain herself altogether from any such work, perhaps I should not dare lightly to call her an adulteress; but who shall say that she sins not, when he is aware that she has intercourse with a man, not being his wife? But further, if from that intercourse, so far as pertains to herself, she has no wish but for sons, and suffers unwilling whatever she suffers beyond the cause of begetting; there are many matrons to whom she is to be preferred; who, although they are not adulteresses, yet force their husbands, for the most part also wishing to exercise continence, to pay the due of the flesh, not through desire of children, but through glow of lust making an intemperate use of their very right; in whose marriages, however, this very thing, that they are married, is a good. For for this purpose are they married, that the lust being brought under a lawful bond, should not float at large without form and loose; having of itself weakness of flesh that cannot be curbed, but of marriage fellowship of faith that cannot be dissolved; of itself encroachment of immoderate intercourse, of marriage a way of chastely begetting. For, although it be shameful to wish to use a husband for purposes of lust, yet it is honorable to be unwilling to have intercourse save with an husband, and not to give birth to children save from a husband. There are also men incontinent to that degree, that they spare not their wives even when pregnant. Therefore whatever that is immodest, shameless, base, married persons do one with another, is the sin of the persons, not the fault of marriage.

6. Further, in the very case of the more immoderate requirement of the due of the flesh, which the Apostle enjoins not on them by way of command, but allows to them by way of leave, that they have intercourse also beside the cause of begetting children; although evil habits impel them to such intercourse, yet marriage guards them from adultery or fornication. For neither is that committed because of marriage, but is pardoned because of marriage. Therefore married persons owe one another not only the faith of their sexual intercourse itself, for the begetting of children, which is the first fellowship of the human kind in this mortal state; but also, in a way, a mutual service of sustaining one another's weakness, in order to shun unlawful intercourse: so that, although perpetual continence be pleasing to one of them, he may not, save with consent of the other. For thus far also, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the man: in like manner also the man hath not power of his own body, but the woman." That that also, which, not for the begetting of children, but for weakness and incontinence, either he seeks of marriage, or she of her husband, they deny not the one or the other; lest by this they fall into damnable seductions, through temptation of Satan, by reason of incontinence either of both, or of whichever of them. For intercourse of marriage for the sake of begetting hath not fault; but for the satisfying of lust, but yet with husband or wife, by reason of the faith of the bed, it hath venial fault: but adultery or fornication hath deadly fault, and, through this, continence from all intercourse is indeed better even than the intercourse of marriage itself, which takes place for the sake of begetting. But because that Continence is of larger desert, but to pay the due of marriage is no crime, but to demand it beyond the necessity of begetting is a venial fault, but to commit fornication or adultery is a crime to be punished; charity of the married ought to beware, lest whilst it seek for itself occasion of larger honor, it do that for its partner which cause condemnation. "For whosoever putteth away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, maketh her to commit adultery." To such a degree is that marriage compact entered upon a matter of a certain sacrament, that it is not made void even by separation itself, since, so long as her husband lives, even by whom she hath been left, she commits adultery, in case she be married to another: and he who hath left her, is the cause of this evil.



7. But I marvel, if, as it is allowed to put away a wife who is an adulteress, so it be allowed, having put her away, to marry another. For holy Scripture causes a hard knot in this matter, in that the Apostle says, that, by commandment of the Lord, the wife ought not to depart from her husband, but, in case she shall have departed, to remain unmarried, or to be reconciled to her husband; whereas surely she ought not to depart and remain unmarried, save from an husband that is an adulterer, lest by withdrawing from him, who is not an adulterer, she cause him to commit adultery. But perhaps she may justly be reconciled to her husband, either he being to be borne with, if she cannot contain herself, or being now corrected. But I see not how the man can have permission to marry another, in case he have left an adulteress, when a woman has not to be married to another, in case she have left an adulterer. And, this being the case, so strong is that bond of fellowship in married persons, that, although it be tied for the sake of begetting children, not even for the sake of begetting children is it loosed. For it is in a man's power to put away a wife that is barren, and marry one of whom to have children. And yet it is not allowed; and now indeed in our times, and after the usage of Rome, neither to marry in addition, so as to have more than one wife living: and, surely, in case of an adulteress or adulterer being left, it would be possible that more men should be born, if either the woman were married to another, or the man should marry another. And yet, if this be not lawful, as the Divine Rule seems to prescribe, who is there but it must make him attentive to learn, what is the meaning of this so great strength of the marriage bond? Which I by no means think could have been of so great avail, were it not that there were taken a certain sacrament of some greater matter from out this weak mortal state of men, so that, men deserting it, and seeking to dissolve it, it should remain unshaken for their punishment. Seeing that the compact of marriage is not done away by divorce intervening; so that they continue wedded persons one to another, even after separation; and commit adultery with those, with whom they shall be joined, even after their own divorce, either the woman with a man, or the man with a woman. And yet, save in the City of our God, in His Holy Mount, the case is not such with the wife. But, that the laws of the Gentiles are otherwise, who is there that knows not; where, by the interposition of divorce, without any offense of which man takes cognizance, both the woman is married to whom she will, and the man

marries whom he will. And something like this custom, on account of the hardness of the Israelites, Moses seems to have allowed, concerning a bill of divorcement. In which matter there appears rather a rebuke, than an approval, of divorce.

8. “Honorable,” therefore, “is marriage in all, and the bed undefiled.” And this we do not so call a good, as that it is a good in comparison of fornication: otherwise there will be two evils, of which the second is worse: or fornication will also be a good, because adultery is worse: for it is worse to violate the marriage of another, than to cleave unto an harlot: and adultery will be a good, because incest is worse; for it is worse to lie with a mother than with the wife of another: and, until we arrive at those things, which, as the Apostle saith, “it is a shame even to speak of,” all will be good in comparison of what are worse. But who can doubt that this is false? Therefore marriage and fornication are not two evils, whereof the second is worse: but marriage and continence are two goods, whereof the second is better, even as this temporal health and sickness are not two evils, whereof the second is worse; but that health and immortality are two goods, whereof the second is better. Also knowledge and vanity are not two evils, whereof vanity is the worse: but knowledge and charity are two goods, whereof charity is the better. For “knowledge shall be destroyed,” saith the Apostle: and yet it is necessary for this time: but “charity shall never fail.” Thus also this mortal begetting, on account of which marriage takes place, shall be destroyed: but freedom from all sexual intercourse is both angelic exercise here, and continueth for ever. But as the repasts of the Just are better than the fasts of the sacrilegious, so the marriage of the faithful is to be set before the virginity of the impious. However neither in that case is repast preferred to fasting, but righteousness to sacrilege; nor in this, marriage to virginity, but faith to impiety. For for this end the righteous, when need is, take their repast, that, as good masters, they may give to their slaves, i.e., their bodies, what is just and fair: but for this end the sacrilegious fast, that they may serve devils. Thus for this end the faithful are married, that they may be chastely joined unto husbands, but for this end the impious are virgins, that they may commit fornication away from the true God. As, therefore, that was good, which Martha was doing, being engaged in the ministering unto the Saints, but that better, which Mary, her sister, sitting at

the feet of the Lord, and hearing His word; thus we praise the good of Susanna in married chastity, but yet we set before her the good of the widow Anna, and, much more, of the Virgin Mary. It was good that they were doing, who of their substance were ministering necessities unto Christ and His disciples: but better, who left all their substance, that they might be freer to follow the same Lord. But in both these cases of good, whether what these, or whether what Martha and Mary were doing, the better could not be done, unless the other had been passed over or left. Whence we are to understand, that we are not, on this account, to think marriage an evil, because, unless there be abstinence from it, widowed chastity, or virgin purity, cannot be had. For neither on this account was what Martha was doing evil, because, unless her sister abstained from it, she could not do what was better: nor on this account is it evil to receive a just man or a prophet into one's house, because he, who wills to follow Christ unto perfection, ought not even to have a house, in order to do what is better.

9. Truly we must consider, that God gives us some goods, which are to be sought for their own sake, such as wisdom, health, friendship: but others, which are necessary for the sake of somewhat, such as learning, meat, drink, sleep, marriage, sexual intercourse. For of these certain are necessary for the sake of wisdom, as learning: certain for the sake of health, as meat and drink and sleep: certain for the sake of friendship, as marriage or sexual intercourse: for hence subsists the propagation of the human kind, wherein friendly fellowship is a great good. These goods, therefore, which are necessary for the sake of something else, whoso useth not for this purpose, wherefore they were instituted, sins; in some cases venially, in other cases damnably. But whoso useth them for this purpose, wherefore they were given doeth well. Therefore, to whomsoever they are not necessary, if he use them not, he doeth better. Wherefore, these goods, when we have need, we do well to wish; but we do better not to wish than to wish: because ourselves are in a better state, when we account them not necessary. And on this account it is good to marry, because it is good to beget children, to be a mother of a family: but it is better not to marry, because it is better not to stand in need of this work, in order to human fellowship itself. For such is the state of the human race now, that (others, who contain not, not only being taken up with marriage, but many also waxing wanton through

unlawful concubinages, the Good Creator working what is good out of their evils) there fails not numerous progeny, and abundant succession, out of which to procure holy friendships. Whence we gather, that, in the first times of the human race, chiefly for the propagation of the People of God, through whom the Prince and Saviour of all people should both be prophesied of, and be born, it was the duty of the Saints to use this good of marriage, not as to be sought for its own sake, but necessary for the sake of something else: but now, whereas, in order to enter upon holy and pure fellowship, there is on all sides from out all nations an overflowing fullness of spiritual kindred, even they who wish to contract marriage only for the sake of children, are to be admonished, that they use rather the larger good of continence.

10. But I am aware of some that murmur: What, say they, if all men should abstain from all sexual intercourse, whence will the human race exist? Would that all would this, only in “charity out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeigned;” much more speedily would the City of God be filled, and the end of the world hastened. For what else doth the Apostle, as is manifest, exhort to, when he saith, speaking on this head, “I would that all were as myself;” or in that passage, “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remains that both they who have wives, be as though not having: and they who weep, as though not weeping: and they who rejoice, as though not rejoicing: and they who buy, as though not buying: and they who use this world as though they use it not. For the form of this world passeth by. I would have you without care.” Then he adds, “Whoso is without a wife thinks of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord: but whoso is joined in marriage, thinks of the things of the world, how to please his wife: and a woman that is unmarried and a virgin is different: she that is unmarried is anxious about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit: but she that is married, is anxious about the things of the world, how to please her husband.” Whence it seems to me, that at this time, those only, who contain not, ought to marry, according to that sentence of the same Apostle, “But if they contain not, let them be married: for it is better to be married than to burn.”

11. And yet not to these themselves is marriage a sin; which, if it were chosen in comparison of fornication, would be a less sin than fornication, and yet would be a sin. But now what shall we say against the most plain speech of the Apostle, saying, "Let her do what she will; she sinneth not, if she be married;" and, "If thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned: and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not." Hence surely it is not lawful now to doubt that marriage is no sin. Therefore the Apostle alloweth not marriage as matter "of pardon:" for who can doubt that it is extremely absurd to say, that they have not sinned, unto whom "pardon" is granted. But he allows, as matter of "pardon," that sexual intercourse, which takes place through incontinence, not alone for the begetting of children, and, at times, not at all for the begetting of children; and it is not that marriage forces this to take place, but that it procures pardon for it; provided however it be not so in excess as to hinder what ought to be set aside as seasons of prayer, nor be changed into that use which is against nature, on which the Apostle could not be silent, when speaking of the excessive corruptions of unclean and impious men. For necessary sexual intercourse for begetting is free from blame, and itself is alone worthy of marriage. But that which goes beyond this necessity, no longer follows reason, but lust. And yet it pertains to the character of marriage, not to exact this, but to yield it to the partner, lest by fornication the other sin damnably. But, if both are set under such lust, they do what is plainly not matter of marriage. However, if in their intercourse they love what is honest more than what is dishonest, that is, what is matter of marriage more than what is not matter of marriage, this is allowed to them on the authority of the Apostle as matter of pardon: and for this fault, they have in their marriage, not what sets them on to commit it, but what entreats pardon for it, if they turn not away from them the mercy of God, either by not abstaining on certain days, that they may be free to pray, and through this abstinence, as through fasting, may commend their prayers; or by changing the natural use into that which is against nature, which is more damnable when it is done in the case of husband or wife.

12. For, whereas that natural use, when it pass beyond the compact of marriage, that is, beyond the necessity of begetting, is pardonable in the case of a wife, damnable in the case of an harlot; that which is against

nature is execrable when done in the case of an harlot, but more execrable in the case of a wife. Of so great power is the ordinance of the Creator, and the order of Creation, that, in matters allowed us to use, even when the due measure is exceeded, it is far more tolerable, than, in what are not allowed, either a single, or rare excess. And, therefore, in a matter allowed, want of moderation, in a husband or wife, is to be borne with, in order that lust break not forth into a matter that is not allowed. Hence is it also that he sins far less, who is ever so unceasing in approaches to his wife, than he who approaches ever so seldom to commit fornication. But, when the man shall wish to use the member of the wife not allowed for this purpose, the wife is more shameful, if she suffer it to take place in her own case, than if in the case of another woman. Therefore the ornament of marriage is chastity of begetting, and faith of yielding the due of the flesh: this is the work of marriage, this the Apostle defends from every charge, in saying, “Both if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned: and if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not:” and, “Let her do what she will: she sinneth not if she be married.” But an advance beyond moderation in demanding the due of either sex, for the reasons which I have stated above, is allowed to married persons as matter of pardon.

13. What therefore he says, “She, that is unmarried, thinketh of the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit;” we are not to take in such sense, as to think that a chaste Christian wife is not holy in body. Forsooth unto all the faithful it was said, “Know ye not that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Ghost within you, Whom ye have from God?” Therefore the bodies also of the married are holy, so long as they keep faith to one another and to God. And that this sanctity of either of them, even an unbelieving partner does not stand in the way of, but rather that the sanctity of the wife profits the unbelieving husband, and the sanctity of the husband profits the unbelieving wife, the same Apostle is witness, saying, “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in a brother.” Wherefore that was said according to the greater sanctity of the unmarried than of the married, unto which there is also due a greater reward, according as, the one being a good, the other is a greater good: inasmuch as also she has this thought only, how to please the Lord. For it is not that a female who believes, keeping married

chastity, thinks not how to please the Lord; but assuredly less so, in that she thinks of the things of the world, how to please her husband. For this is what he would say of them, that they may, in a certain way, find themselves obliged by marriage to think of the things of the world, how to please their husbands.

14. And not without just cause a doubt is raised, whether he said this of all married women, or of such as so many are, as that nearly all may be thought so to be. For neither doth that, which he saith of unmarried women, “She, that is unmarried, thinkest of the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit:” pertain unto all unmarried women: whereas there are certain widows who are dead, who live in delights. However, so far as regards a certain distinction and, as it were, character of their own, of the unmarried and married; as she deserves the excess of hatred, who containing from marriage, that is, from a thing allowed, does not contain from offenses, either of luxury, or pride, or curiosity and prating; so the married woman is seldom met with, who, in the very obedience of married life, hath no thought save how to please God, by adorning herself, not with plaited hair, or gold and pearls and costly attire, but as becometh women making profession of piety, through a good conversation. Such marriages, forsooth, the Apostle Peter also describes by giving commandment. “In like manner,” saith he, “wives obeying their own husbands; in order that, even if any obey not the word, they may be gained without discourse through the conversation of the wives, seeing your fear and chaste conversation: that they be not they that are adorned without with crispings of hair, or clothed with gold or with fair raiment; but that hidden man of your heart, in that unbroken continuance of a quiet and modest spirit, which before the Lord also is rich. For thus certain holy women, who hoped in the Lord, used to adorn themselves, obeying their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord: whose daughters ye are become, when ye do well, and fear not with any vain fear. Husbands in like manner living at peace and in chastity with your wives, both give ye honor as to the weaker and subject vessel, as with co-heirs of grace, and see that your prayers be not hindered.” Is it indeed that such marriages have no thought of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord? But they are very rare: who denies this? And,

being, as they are, rare, nearly all the persons who are such, were not joined together in order to be such, but being already joined together became such.

15. For what Christian men of our time being free from the marriage bond, having power to contain from all sexual intercourse, seeing it to be now “a time,” as it is written, “not of embracing, but of abstaining from embrace,” would not choose rather to keep virginal or widowed continence, than (now that there is no obligation from duty to human society) to endure tribulation of the flesh, without which marriages cannot be (to pass over in silence other things from which the Apostle spares.) But when through desire reigning they shall have been joined together, if they shall after overcome it, because it is not lawful to loose, in such wise as it was lawful not to tie, the marriage bond, they become such as the form of marriage makes profession of, so as that either by mutual consent they ascend unto a higher degree of holiness, or, if both are not such, the one who is such will not be one to exact but to yield the due, observing in all things a chaste and religious concord. But in those times, wherein as yet the mystery of our salvation was veiled in prophetic sacraments, even they who were such before marriage, yet contracted marriage through the duty of begetting children, not overcome by lust, but led by piety, unto whom if there were given such choice as in the revelation of the New Testament there hath been given, the Lord saying “Whoso can receive, let him receive;” no one doubts that they would have been ready to receive it even with joy, who reads with careful attention what use they made of their wives, at a time when also it was allowed one man to have several, whom he had with more chastity, than any now has his one wife, of these, unto whom we see what the Apostle allows by way of leave. For they had them in the work of begetting children, not “in the disease of desire, as the nations which know not God.” And this is so great a thing, that many at this day more easily abstain from all sexual intercourse their whole life through, than, if they are joined in marriage, observe the measure of not coming together except for the sake of children. Forsooth we have many brethren and partners in the heavenly inheritance of both sexes that are continent, whether they be such as have made trial of marriage, or such as are entirely free from all such intercourse: forsooth they are without number: yet, in our familiar discourses with them, whom have we heard, whether of those who are, or of those who have been,



married, declaring to us that he has never had sexual intercourse with his wife, save with the hope of conception? What, therefore, the Apostles command the married, this is proper to marriage, but what they allow by way of pardon, or what hinders prayers, this marriage compels not, but bears with.

16. Therefore if haply, (which whether it can take place, I know not; and rather think it cannot take place; but yet, if haply), having taken unto himself a concubine for a time, a man shall have sought sons only from this same intercourse; neither thus is that union to be preferred to the marriage even of those women, who do this, that is matter of pardon. For we must consider what belongs to marriage, not what belongs to such women as marry and use marriage with less moderation than they ought. For neither if each one so use lands entered upon unjustly and wrongly, as out of their fruits to give large alms, doth he therefore justify rapine: nor if another brood over, through avarice, an estate to which he has succeeded, or which he hath justly gained, are we on this account to blame the rule of civil law, whereby he is made a lawful owner. Nor will the wrongfulness of a tyrannical rebellion deserve praise, if the tyrant treat his subjects with royal clemency: nor will the order of royal power deserve blame, if a king rage with tyrannical cruelty. For it is one thing to wish to use well unjust power, and it is another thing to use unjustly just power. Thus neither do concubines taken for a time, if they be such in order to sons, make their concubinage lawful; nor do married women, if they live wantonly with their husbands, attach any charge to the order of marriage.

17. That marriage can take place of persons first ill joined, an honest decree following after, is manifest. But a marriage once for all entered upon in the City of our God, where, even from the first union of the two, the man and the woman, marriage bears a certain sacramental character, can no way be dissolved but by the death of one of them. For the bond of marriage remains, although a family, for the sake of which it was entered upon, do not follow through manifest barrenness; so that, when now married persons know that they shall not have children, yet it is not lawful for them to separate even for the very sake of children, and to join themselves unto others. And if they shall so do, they commit adultery with those unto whom

they join themselves, but themselves remain husbands and wives. Clearly with the good will of the wife to take another woman, that from her may be born sons common to both, by the sexual intercourse and seed of the one, but by the right and power of the other, was lawful among the ancient fathers: whether it be lawful now also, I would not hastily pronounce. For there is not now necessity of begetting children, as there then was, when, even when wives bare children, it was allowed, in order to a more numerous posterity, to marry other wives in addition, which now is certainly not lawful. For the difference that separates times causes the due season to have so great force unto the justice and doing or not doing any thing, that now a man does better, if he marry not even one wife, unless he be unable to contain. But then they married even several without any blame, even those who could much more easily contain, were it not that piety at that time had another demand upon them. For, as the wise and just man, who now desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ, and takes more pleasure in this, the best, now not from desire of living here, but from duty of being useful , takes food that he may remain in the flesh, which is necessary for the sake of others; so to have intercourse with females in right of marriage, was to holy men at that time a matter of duty not of lust.

18. For what food is unto the conservation of the man, this sexual intercourse is unto the conservation of the race: and both are not without carnal delight: which yet being modified, and by restraint of temperance reduced unto the use after nature, cannot be lust. But what unlawful food is in the supporting of life, this sexual intercourse of fornication or adultery is in the seeking of a family. And what unlawful food is in luxury of belly and throat, this unlawful intercourse is in lust that seeks not a family. And what the excessive appetite of some is in lawful food, this that intercourse that is matter of pardon is in husband and wife. As therefore it is better to die of hunger than to eat things offered unto idols: so it is better to die without children, than to seek a family from unlawful intercourse. But from whatever source men be born, if they follow not the vices of their parents, and worship God aright, they shall be honest and safe. For the seed of man, from out what kind of man soever, is the creation of God, and it shall fare ill with those who use it ill, yet shall not, itself at any time be evil. But as the good sons of adulterers are no defense of adulteries, so the evil sons of

married persons are no charge against marriage. Wherefore as the Fathers of the time of the New Testament taking food from the duty of conservation, although they took it with natural delight of the flesh, were yet in no way compared with the delight of those who fed on what had been offered in sacrifice, or of those who, although the food was lawful, yet took it to excess: so the Fathers of the time of the Old Testament from the duty of conservation used sexual intercourse; and yet that their natural delight, by no means relaxed unto unreasonable and unlawful lust, is not to be compared either with the vileness of fornications, or with the intemperance of married persons. Forsooth through the same vein of charity, now after the spirit, then after the flesh, it was a duty to beget sons for the sake of that mother Jerusalem: but it was nought save the difference of times which made the works of the fathers different. But thus it was necessary that even Prophets, not living after the flesh, should come together after the flesh; even as it was necessary that Apostles also, not living after the flesh, should eat food after the flesh.

19. Therefore as many women as there are now, unto whom it is said, “if they contain not, let them be married, ^” are not to be compared to the holy women then, even when they married. Marriage itself indeed in all nations is for the same cause of begetting sons, and of what character soever these may be afterward, yet was marriage for this purpose instituted, that they may be born in due and honest order. But men, who contain not, as it were ascend unto marriage by a step of honesty: but they, who without doubt would contain, if the purpose of that time had allowed this, in a certain measure descended unto marriage by a step of piety. And, on this account, although the marriages of both, so far as they are marriages, in that they are for the sake of begetting, are equally good, yet these men when married are not to be compared with those men as married. For these have, what is allowed them by the way of leave, on account of the honesty of marriage, although it pertain not to marriage; that is, the advance which goes beyond the necessity of begetting, which they had not. But neither can these, if haply there be now any found, who neither seek, nor desire, in marriage any thing, save that wherefore marriage was instituted, be made equal to those men. For in these the very desire of sons is carnal, but in those it was spiritual, in that it was suited to the sacrament of that time. Forsooth now no

one who is made perfect in piety seeks to have sons, save after a spiritual sense; but then it was the work of piety itself to beget sons even after a carnal sense: in that the begetting of that people was fraught with tidings of things to come, and pertained unto the prophetic dispensation.

20. And on this account, not, so as it was allowed one man to have even several wives, was it allowed one female to have several husbands, not even for the sake of a family, in case it should happen that the woman could bear, the man could not beget. For by a secret law of nature things that stand chief love to be singular; but what are subject are set under, not only one under one, but, if the system of nature or society allow, even several under one, not without becoming beauty. For neither hath one slave so several masters, in the way that several slaves have one master. Thus we read not that any of the holy women served two or more living husbands: but we read that many females served one husband, when the social state of that nation allowed it, and the purpose of the time persuaded to it: for neither is it contrary to the nature of marriage. For several females can conceive from one man: but one female cannot from several, (such is the power of things principal:) as many souls are rightly made subject unto one God. And on this account there is no True God of souls, save One: but one soul by means of many false gods may commit fornication, but not be made fruitful.

21. But since out of many souls there shall be hereafter one City of such as have one soul and one heart towards God; which perfection of our unity shall be hereafter, after this sojourn in a strange land, wherein the thoughts of all shall neither be hidden one from another, nor shall be in any matter opposed one to another; on this account the Sacrament of marriage of our time hath been so reduced to one man and one wife, as that it is not lawful to ordain any as a steward of the Church, save the husband of one wife. And this they have understood more acutely who have been of opinion, that neither is he to be ordained, who as a catechumen or as a heathen had a second wife. For it is a matter of sacrament, not of sin. For in baptism all sins are put away. But he who said, "If thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not:" and, "Let her do what she will, she sinneth not, if she be married," hath made it plain enough that marriage is no sin. But on account of the sanctity

of the Sacrament, as a female, although it be as a catechumen that she hath suffered violence, cannot after Baptism be consecrated among the virgins of God: so there was no absurdity in supposing of him who had exceeded the number of one wife, not that he had committed any sin, but that he had lost a certain prescript rule of a sacrament necessary not unto desert of good life, but unto the seal of ecclesiastic ordination; and thus, as the many wives of the old Fathers signified our future Churches out of all nations made subject unto one husband, Christ: so our chief-priest, the husband of one wife, signifies unity out of all nations, made subject unto one husband, Christ: which shall then be perfected, when He shall have unveiled the hidden things of darkness, and shall have made manifest the thoughts of the heart, that then each may have praise from God. But now there are manifest, there are hidden, dissensions, even where charity is safe between those, who shall be hereafter one, and in one; which shall then certainly have no existence. As therefore the Sacrament of marriage with several of that time signified the multitude that should be hereafter made subject unto God in all nations of the earth, so the Sacrament of marriage with one of our times signifies the unity of us all made subject to God, which shall be hereafter in one Heavenly City. Therefore as to serve two or more, so to pass over from a living husband into marriage with another, was neither lawful then, nor is it lawful now, nor will it ever be lawful. Forsooth to apostatise from the One God, and to go into adulterous superstition of another, is ever an evil. Therefore not even for the sake of a more numerous family did our Saints do, what the Roman Cato is said to have done, to give up his wife, during his own life, to fill even another's house with sons. Forsooth in the marriage of one woman the sanctity of the Sacrament is of more avail than the fruitfulness of the womb.

22. If, therefore, even they who are united in marriage only for the purpose of begetting, for which purpose marriage was instituted, are not compared with the Fathers, seeking their very sons in a way far other than do these; forasmuch as Abraham, being bidden to slay his son, fearless and devoted, spared not his only son, whom from out of great despair he had received save that he laid down his hand, when He forbade him, at Whose command he had lifted it up; it remains that we consider, whether at least continent persons among us are to be compared to those Fathers who were married;

unless haply now these are to be preferred to them, to whom we have not yet found persons to compare. For there was a greater good in their marriage, than is the proper good of marriage: to which without doubt the good of Continence is to be preferred: because they sought not sons from marriage by such duty as these are led by, from a certain sense of mortal nature requiring succession against decease. And, whoso denies this to be good he knows not God, the Creator of all things good, from things heavenly even unto things earthly, from things immortal even unto things mortal. But neither are beasts altogether without this sense of begetting, and chiefly birds, whose care of building nests meets us at once, and a certain likeness to marriages, in order to beget and nurture together. But those men, with mind far holier, surpassed this affection of mortal nature, the chastity whereof in its own kind, there being added thereto the worship of God, as some have understood, is set forth as bearing first thirty-fold; who sought sons of their marriage for the sake of Christ; in order to distinguish His race after the flesh from all nations: even as God was pleased to order, that this above the rest should avail to prophesy of Him, in that it was foretold of what race also, and of what nation, He should hereafter come in the flesh. Therefore it was a far greater good than the chaste marriages of believers among us, which father Abraham knew in his own thigh, under which he bade his servant to put his hand, that he might take an oath concerning the wife, whom his son was to marry. For putting his hand under the thigh of a man, and swearing by the God of Heaven, what else did he signify, than that in that Flesh, which derived its origin from that thigh, the God of Heaven would come? Therefore marriage is a good, wherein married persons are so much the better, in proportion as they fear God with greater chastity and faithfulness, specially if the sons, whom they desire after the flesh, they also bring up after the spirit.

23. Nor, in that the Law orders a man to be purified even after intercourse with a wife, doth it show it to be sin: unless it be that which is allowed by way of pardon, which also, being in excess, hinders prayers. But, as the Law sets many things in sacraments and shadows of things to come; a certain as it were material formless state of the seed, which having received form will hereafter produce the body of man, is set to signify a life formless, and untaught: from which formless state, forasmuch as it behoves

that man be cleansed by form and teaching of learning; as a sign of this, that purification was ordered after the emission of seed. For neither in sleep also doth it take place through sin. And yet there also a purification was commanded. Or, if any think this also to be sin, thinking that it comes not to pass save from some lust of this kind, which without doubt is false; what? are the ordinary menses also of women sins? And yet from these the same old Law commanded that they should be cleansed by expiation; for no other cause, save the material formless state itself, in that which, when conception hath taken place, is added as it were to build up the body, and for this reason, when it flows without form, the Law would have signified by it a soul without form of discipline, flowing and loose in an unseemly manner. And that this ought to receive form, it signifies, when it commands such flow of the body to be purified. Lastly, what? to die, is that also a sin? or, to bury a dead person, is it not also a good work of humanity? and yet a purification was commanded even on occasion of this also; because also a dead body, life abandoning it, is not sin, but signifies the sin of a soul abandoned by righteousness.

24. Marriage, I say, is a good, and may be, by sound reason, defended against all calumnies. But with the marriage of the holy fathers, I inquire not what marriage, but what continence, is on a level: or rather not marriage with marriage; for it is an equal gift in all cases given to the mortal nature of men; but men who use marriage, forasmuch as I find not, to compare with other men who used marriage in a far other spirit, we must require what continent persons admit of being compared with those married persons. Unless, haply, Abraham could not contain from marriage, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, he who, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, could fearless sacrifice his only pledge of offspring, for whose sake marriage was dear!

25. Forsooth continence is a virtue, not of the body, but of the soul. But the virtues of the soul are sometimes shown in work, sometimes lie hid in habit, as the virtue of martyrdom shone forth and appeared by enduring sufferings; but how many are there of the same virtue of mind, unto whom trial is wanting, whereby what is within, in the sight of God, may go forth also into the sight of men, and not to men begin to exist, but only become

known? For there was already in Job patience, which God knew, and to which He bore witness: but it became known unto men by test of trial: and what lay hid within was not produced, but shown, by the things that were brought on him from without. Timothy also certainly had the virtue of abstaining from wine, which Paul took not from him, by advising him to use a moderate portion of wine, “for the sake of his stomach and his often infirmities,” otherwise he taught him a deadly lesson, that for the sake of the health of the body there should be a loss of virtue in the soul: but because what he advised could take place with safety to that virtue, the profit of drinking was so left free to the body, as that the habit of continence continued in the soul. For it is the habit itself, whereby any thing is done, when there is need; but when it is not done, it can be done, only there is no need. This habit, in the matter of that continence which is from sexual intercourse, they have not, unto whom it is said, “If they contain not, let them be married.” But this they have, unto whom it is said, “Whoso can receive, let him receive.” Thus have perfect souls used earthly goods, that are necessary for something else, through this habit of continence, so as, by it, not to be bound by them, and so as by it, to have power also not to use them, in case there were no need. Nor doth any use them well, save who hath power also not to use them. Many indeed with more ease practise abstinence, so as not to use, than practise temperance, so as to use well. But no one can wisely use them, save who can also continently not use them. From this habit Paul also said, “I know both to abound, and to suffer want.” Forsooth to suffer want is the part of any men soever; but to know to suffer want is the part of great men. So, also, to abound, who cannot? but to know also to abound, is not, save of those, whom abundance corrupts not.

26. But, in order that it may be more clearly understood, how there may be virtue in habit, although it be not in work, I speak of an example, about which no Catholic Christian can doubt. For that our Lord Jesus Christ in truth of flesh hungered and thirsted, ate and drank, no one doubts of such as out of the Gospel are believers. What, then, was there not in Him the virtue of continence from meat and drink, as great as in John Baptist? “For John came neither eating nor drinking; and they said, He hath a devil; the Son of Man came both eating and drinking; and they said, “Lo, a glutton and wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.” What, are not such things said



also against them of His household, our fathers, from another kind of using of things earthy, so far as pertains to sexual intercourse; “Lo, men lustful and unclean, lovers of women and lewdness?” And yet as in Him that was not true, although it were true that He abstained not, even as John, from eating and drinking, for Himself saith most plainly and truly, “John came, not eating, nor drinking; the Son of Man came eating and drinking:” so neither is this true in these Fathers; although there hath come now the Apostle of Christ, not wedded, nor begetting, so that the heathen say of him, He was a magician; but there came then the Prophet of Christ, marrying and begetting sons, so that the Manichees say of him, He was a man fond of women: “And wisdom,” saith He, “hath been justified of her children.” What the Lord there added, after He had thus spoken of John and of Himself; “But wisdom,” saith He, “hath been justified of her children.” Who see that the virtue of continence ought to exist even in the habit of the soul, but to be shown forth in deed, according to opportunity of things and times; even as the virtue of patience of holy martyrs appeared in deed; but of the rest equally holy was in habit. Wherefore, even as there is not unequal desert of patience in Peter, who suffered, and in John, who suffered not; so there is not unequal desert of continence in John who made no trial of marriage, and in Abraham, who begat sons. For both the celibate of the one, and the marriage estate of the other, did service as soldiers to Christ, as times were allotted; but John had continence in work also, but Abraham in habit alone.

27. Therefore at that time, when the Law also, following upon the days of the Patriarchs, pronounced accursed, whoso raised not up seed in Israel, even he, who could, put it not forth, but yet possessed it. But from the period that the fullness of time hath come, that it should be said, “Whoso can receive, let him receive,” from that period even unto this present, and from henceforth even unto the end, whoso hath, worketh: whoso shall be unwilling to work, let him not falsely say, that he hath. And through this means, they, who corrupt good manners by evil communications, with empty and vain craft, say to a Christian man exercising continence, and refusing marriage, What then, are you better than Abraham? But let him not, upon hearing this, be troubled; neither let him dare to say, “Better,” nor let him fall away from his purpose: for the one he saith not truly, the other

he doth not rightly. But let him say, I indeed am not better than Abraham, but the chastity of the unmarried is better than the chastity of marriage; whereof Abraham had one in use, both in habit. For he lived chastely in the marriage state: but it was in his power to be chaste without marriage, but at that time it behoved not. But I with more ease use not marriage, which Abraham used, than so use marriage as Abraham used it: and therefore I am better than those, who through incontinence of mind cannot do what I do; not than those, who, on account of difference of time, did not do what I do. For what I now do, they would have done better, if it had been to be done at that time; but what they did, I should not so do, although it were now to be done. Or, if he feels and knows himself to be such, as that, (the virtue of continence being preserved and continued in the habit of his mind, in case he had descended unto the use of marriage from some duty of religion,) he should be such an husband, and such a father, as Abraham was; let him dare to make plain answer to that captious questioner, and to say, I am not indeed better than Abraham, only in this kind of continence, of which he was not void, although it appeared not: but I am such, not having other than he, but doing other. Let him say this plainly: forasmuch as, even if he shall wish to glory, he will not be a fool, for he saith the truth. But if he spare, lest any think of him above what he sees him, or hears any thing of him; let him remove from his own person the knot of the question, and let him answer, not concerning the man, but concerning the thing itself, and let him say, Whoso hath so great power is such as Abraham. But it may happen that the virtue of continence is less in his mind, who uses not marriage, which Abraham used: but yet it is greater than in his mind, who on this account held chastity of marriage, in that he could not a greater. Thus also let the unmarried woman, whose thoughts are of the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit, when she shall have heard that shameless questioner saying, What, then, are you better than Sara? answer, I am better, but than those, who are void of the virtue of continence, which I believe not of Sara: she therefore together with this virtue did what was suited to that time, from which I am free, that in my body also may appear, what she kept in her mind.

28. Therefore, if we compare the things themselves, we may no way doubt that the chastity of continence is better than marriage chastity, whilst yet

both are good: but when we compare the persons, he is better, who hath a greater good than another. Further, he who hath a greater of the same kind, hath also that which is less; but he, who only hath what is less, assuredly hath not that which is greater. For in sixty, thirty also are contained, not sixty also in thirty. But not to work from out that which he hath, stands in the allotment of duties, not in the want of virtues: forasmuch as neither is he without the good of mercy, who finds not wretched persons such as he may mercifully assist.

29. And there is this further, that men are not rightly compared with men in regard of some one good. For it may come to pass, that one hath not what another hath, but hath another thing, which must be esteemed of more value. The good of obedience is better than of continence. For marriage is in no place condemned by authority of our Scriptures, but disobedience is in no place acquitted. If therefore there be set before us a virgin about to continue so, but yet disobedient, and a married woman who could not continue a virgin, but yet obedient, which shall we call better? shall it be (the one) less praiseworthy, than if she were a virgin, or (the other) worthy of blame, even as she is a virgin? So, if you compare a drunken virgin with a sober married woman, who can doubt to pass the same sentence? Forsooth marriage and virginity are two goods, whereof the one is greater; but sobriety and drunkenness, even as obedience and stubbornness, are, the one good, and the other evil. But it is better to have all goods even in a less degree, than great good with great evil: forasmuch as in the goods of the body also it is better to have the stature of Zacchaeus with sound health, than that of Goliah with fever.

30. The right question plainly is, not whether a virgin every way disobedient is to be compared to an obedient married woman, but a less obedient to a more obedient: forasmuch as that also of marriage is chastity, and therefore a good, but less than virginal. Therefore if the one, by so much less in the good of obedience, as she is greater in the good of chastity, be compared with the other, which of them is to be preferred that person judges, who in the first place comparing chastity itself and obedience, sees that obedience is in a certain way the mother of all virtues. And therefore, for this reason, there may be obedience without virginity, because virginity

is of counsel, not of precept. But I call that obedience, whereby precepts are complied with. And, therefore, there may be obedience to precepts without virginity, but not without chastity. For it pertains unto chastity, not to commit fornication, not to commit adultery, to be defiled by no unlawful intercourse: and whoso observe not these, do contrary to the precepts of God, and on this account are banished from the virtue of obedience. But there may be virginity without obedience, on this account, because it is possible for a woman, having received the counsel of virginity, and having guarded virginity, to slight precepts: even as we have known many sacred virgins, talkative, curious, drunken, litigious, covetous, proud: all which are contrary to precepts, and slay one, even as Eve herself, by the crime of disobedience. Wherefore not only is the obedient to be preferred to the disobedient, but a more obedient married woman to a less obedient virgin.

31. From this obedience that Father, who was not without a wife, was prepared to be without an only son, and that slain by himself. For I shall not without due cause call him an only son, concerning whom he heard the Lord say, “In Isaac shall there be called for thee a seed. ^” Therefore how much sooner would he hear it, that he should be even without a wife, if this he were bidden? Wherefore it is not without reason that we often consider, that some of both sexes, containing from all sexual intercourse, are negligent in obeying precepts, after having with so great warmth caught at the not making use of things that are allowed. Whence who doubts that we do not rightly compare unto the excellence of those holy fathers and mothers begetting sons, the men and women of our time, although free from all intercourse, yet in virtue of obedience inferior: even if there had been wanting to those men in habit of mind also, what is plain in the deed of the latter. Therefore let these follow the Lamb, boys singing the new song, as it is written in the Apocalypse, “who have not defiled themselves with women:” for no other reason than that they have continued virgins. Nor let them on this account think themselves better than the first holy fathers, who used marriage, so to speak, after the fashion of marriage. Forsooth the use of it is such, as that, if in it there hath taken place through carnal intercourse aught which exceeds necessity of begetting, although in a way that deserves pardon, there is pollution. For what doth pardon expiate, if that advance

cause no pollution whatever? From which pollution it were strange if boys following the Lamb were free, unless they continued virgins.

32. Therefore the good of marriage throughout all nations and all men stands in the occasion of begetting, and faith of chastity: but, so far as pertains unto the People of God, also in the sanctity of the Sacrament, by reason of which it is unlawful for one who leaves her husband, even when she has been put away, to be married to another, so long as her husband lives, no not even for the sake of bearing children: and, whereas this is the alone cause, wherefore marriage takes place, not even where that very thing, wherefore it takes place, follows not, is the marriage bond loosed, save by the death of the husband or wife. In like manner as if there take place an ordination of clergy in order to form a congregation of people, although the congregation of people follow not, yet there remains in the ordained persons the Sacrament of Ordination; and if, for any fault, any be removed from his office, he will not be without the Sacrament of the Lord once for all set upon him, albeit continuing unto condemnation. Therefore that marriage takes place for the sake of begetting children, the Apostle is a witness thus, "I will," says he, "that the younger women be married." And, as though it were said to him, For what purpose? straightway he added, "to have children, to be mothers of families." But unto the faith of chastity pertains that saying, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife." But unto the sanctity of the Sacrament that saying, "The wife not to depart from her husband, but, in case she shall have departed, to remain unmarried, or to be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." All these are goods, on account of which marriage is a good; offspring, faith, sacrament. But now, at this time, not to seek offspring after the flesh, and by this means to maintain a certain perpetual freedom from every such work, and to be made subject after a spiritual manner unto one Husband Christ, is assuredly better and holier; provided, that is, men so use that freedom, as it is written, so as to have their thoughts of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord; that is, that Continence at all times do take thought, that obedience fall not short in any matter: and this virtue, as the root-virtue, and (as it is wont to be called) the womb, and clearly universal, the holy fathers of old exercised in deed; but that

Continence they possessed in habit of mind. Who assuredly, through that obedience, whereby they were just and holy, and ever prepared unto every good work, even if they were bidden to abstain from all sexual intercourse, would perform it. For how much more easily could they, at the bidding or exhortation of God, not use sexual intercourse, who, as an act of obedience, could slay the child, for the begetting of which alone they used the ministry of sexual intercourse?

33. And, the case being thus, enough and more than enough answer has been made to the heretics, whether they be Manichees, or whosoever other that bring false charges against the Fathers of the Old Testament, on the subject of their having several wives, thinking this a proof whereby to convict them of incontinence: provided, that is, that they perceive, that that is no sin, which is committed neither against nature, in that they used those women not for wantonness, but for the begetting of children: nor against custom, forasmuch as such things were usually done at those times: nor against command, forasmuch as they were forbidden by no law. But such as used women unlawfully, either the divine sentence in those Scriptures convicts them, or the reading sets them forth for us to condemn and shun, not to approve or imitate.

34. But those of ours who have wives we advise, with all our power, that they dare not to judge of those holy fathers after their own weakness, comparing, as the Apostle says, themselves with themselves; and therefore, not understanding how great strength the soul hath, doing service unto righteousness against lusts, that it acquiesce not in carnal motions of this sort, or suffer them to glide on or advance unto sexual intercourse beyond the necessity of begetting children, so far as the order of nature, so far as the use of custom, so far as the decrees of laws prescribe. Forsooth it is on this account that men have this suspicion concerning those fathers, in that they themselves have either chosen marriage through incontinence, or use their wives with intemperance. But however let such as are continent, either men, who, on the death of their wives, or, women, who, on the death of their husbands, or both, who, with mutual consent, have vowed continence unto God, know that to them indeed there is due a greater recompense than marriage chastity demands; but, (as regards) the marriages of the holy

Fathers, who were joined after the manner of prophecy, who neither in sexual intercourse sought aught save children, nor in children themselves aught save what should set forward Christ coming hereafter in the flesh, not only let them not despise them in comparison of their own purpose, but let them without any doubting prefer them even to their own purpose.

35. Boys also and virgins dedicating unto God actual chastity we do before all things admonish, that they be aware that they must guard their life meanwhile upon earth with so great humility, by how much the more what they have vowed is heavenly. Forsooth it is written, "How great soever thou art, by so much humble thyself in all things." Therefore it is our part to say something of their greatness, it is their part to have thought of great humility. Therefore, except certain, those holy fathers and mothers who were married, than whom these although they be not married are not better, for this reason, that, if they were married, they would not be equal, let them not doubt that they surpass all the rest of this time, either married, or after trial made of marriage, exercising continence; not so far as Anna surpasses Susanna; but so far as Mary surpasses both. I am speaking of what pertains unto the holy chastity itself of the flesh; for who knows not, what other deserts Mary hath? Therefore let them add to this so high purpose conduct suitable, that they may have an assured security of the surpassing reward; knowing of a truth, that, unto themselves and unto all the faithful, beloved and chosen members of Christ, coming many from the East, and from the West, although shining with light of glory that differeth one from another, according to their deserts, there is this great gift bestowed in common, to sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, who not for the sake of this world, but for the sake of Christ, were husbands, for the sake of Christ were fathers.

# ON THE MORALS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

(DE MORIBUS ECCLESIAE CATHOLICAE)

A.D. 388.

ST. AUGUSTIN

TRANSLATED BY THE

REV. RICHARD STOTHERT, M.A.,

BOMBAY



# CONTENTS

## ON THE MORALS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### Preface

### Chapter 1

How the Pretensions of the Manichaeans are to Be Refuted. Two Manichaean Falsehoods

### Chapter 2

He Begins with Arguments, in Compliance with the Mistaken Method of the Manichaeans

### Chapter 3

Happiness is in the Enjoyment of Man's Chief Good. Two Conditions of the Chief Good: 1st, Nothing is Better Than It; 2d, It Cannot Be Lost Against the Will

### Chapter 4

Man—What?

### Chapter 5

Man's Chief Good is Not the Chief Good of the Body Only, But the Chief Good of the Soul

### Chapter 6

Virtue Gives Perfection to the Soul; The Soul Obtains Virtue by Following God; Following God is the Happy Life

### Chapter 7

The Knowledge of God to Be Obtained from the Scripture. The Plan and Principal Mysteries of the Divine Scheme of Redemption

### Chapter 8

God is the Chief Good, Whom We are to Seek After with Supreme Affection

### Chapter 9

Harmony of the Old and New Testament on the Precepts of Charity

### Chapter 10

What the Church Teaches About God. The Two Gods of the Manichaeans

### Chapter 11

God is the One Object of Love; Therefore He is Man's Chief Good. Nothing is Better Than God. God Cannot Be Lost Against Our Will

Chapter 12

We are United to God by Love, in Subjection to Him

Chapter 13

We are Joined Inseparably to God by Christ and His Spirit

Chapter 14

We Cleave to the Trinity, Our Chief Good, by Love

Chapter 15

The Christian Definition of the Four Virtues

Chapter 16

Harmony of the Old and New Testaments

Chapter 17

Appeal to the Manichaeans, Calling on Them to Repent

Chapter 18

Only in the Catholic Church is Perfect Truth Established on the Harmony of Both Testaments

Chapter 19

Description of the Duties of Temperance, According to the Sacred Scriptures

Chapter 20

We are Required to Despise All Sensible Things, and to Love God Alone

Chapter 21

Popular Renown and Inquisitiveness are Condemned in the Sacred Scriptures

Chapter 22

Fortitude Comes from the Love of God

Chapter 23

Scripture Precepts and Examples of Fortitude

Chapter 24

Of Justice and Prudence

Chapter 25

Four Moral Duties Regarding the Love of God, of Which Love the Reward is Eternal Life and the Knowledge of the Truth

Chapter 26

Love of Ourselves and of Our Neighbor

Chapter 27

On Doing Good to the Body of Our Neighbor

Chapter 28

On Doing Good to the Soul of Our Neighbor. Two Parts of Discipline, Restraint and Instruction. Through Good Conduct We Arrive at the Knowledge of the Truth

Chapter 29

Of the Authority of the Scriptures

Chapter 30

The Church Apostrophised as Teacher of All Wisdom. Doctrine of the Catholic Church

Chapter 31

The Life of the Anachoretēs and Coenobites Set Against the Continence of the Manichaeans

Chapter 32

Praise of the Clergy.

Chapter 33

Another Kind of Men Living Together in Cities. Fasts of Three Days

Chapter 34

The Church is Not to Be Blamed for the Conduct of Bad Christians, Worshippers of Tombs and Pictures

Chapter 35

Marriage and Property Allowed to the Baptized by the Apostles

# Preface

It is laid down at the outset that the customs of the holy life of the Church should be referred to the chief good of man, that is, God. We must seek after God with supreme affection; and this doctrine is supported in the Catholic Church by the authority of both Testaments. The four virtues get their names from different forms of this love. Then follow the duties of love to our neighbor. In the Catholic Church we find examples of continence and of true Christian conduct.

## CHAPTER 1

### HOW THE PRETENSIONS OF THE MANICHAEANS ARE TO BE REFUTED. TWO MANICHAEAN FALSEHOODS

1. Enough, probably, has been done in our other books in the way of answering the ignorant and profane attacks which the Manichaeans make on the law, which is called the Old Testament, in a spirit of vainglorious boasting, and with the approval of the uninstructed. Here, too, I may shortly touch upon the subject. For every one with average intelligence can easily see that the explanation of the Scriptures should be sought for from those who are the professed teachers of the Scriptures; and that it may happen, and indeed always happens, that many things seem absurd to the ignorant, which, when they are explained by the learned, appear all the more excellent, and are received in the explanation with the greater pleasure on account of the obstructions which made it difficult to reach the meaning. This commonly happens as regards the holy books of the Old Testament, if only the man who meets with difficulties applies to a pious teacher, and not to a profane critic, and if he begins his inquiries from a desire to find truth, and not in rash opposition. And should the inquirer meet with some, whether bishops or presbyters, or any officials or ministers of the Catholic Church, who either avoid in all cases opening up mysteries, or, content with

simple faith, have no desire for more recondite knowledge, he must not despair of finding the knowledge of the truth in a case where neither are all able to teach to whom the inquiry is addressed, nor are all inquirers worthy of learning the truth. Diligence and piety are both necessary: on the one hand, we must have knowledge to find truth, and, on the other hand, we must deserve to get the knowledge.

2. But as the Manichaeans have two tricks for catching the unwary, so as to make them take them as teachers,—one, that of finding fault with the Scriptures, which they either misunderstand or wish to be misunderstood, the other, that of making a show of chastity and of notable abstinence,—this book shall contain our doctrine of life and morals according to Catholic teaching, and will perhaps make it appear how easy it is to pretend to virtue, and how difficult to possess virtue. I will refrain, if I can, from attacking their weak points, which I know well, with the violence with which they attack what they know nothing of; for I wish them, if possible, to be cured rather than conquered. And I will quote such testimonies from the Scriptures as they are bound to believe, for they shall be from the New Testament; and even from this I will take none of the passages which the Manichaeans when hard pressed are accustomed to call spurious, but passages which they are obliged to acknowledge and approve. And for every testimony from apostolic teaching I will bring a similar statement from the Old Testament, that if they ever become willing to wake up from their persistent dreams, and to rise towards the light of Christian faith, they may discover both how far from being Christian is the life which they profess, and how truly Christian is the Scripture which they cavil at.

## CHAPTER 2

HE BEGINS WITH ARGUMENTS, IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE MISTAKEN METHOD OF THE MANICHAEANS

3. Where, then, shall I begin? With authority, or with reasoning? In the order of nature, when we learn anything, authority precedes reasoning. For a reason may seem weak, when, after it is given, it requires authority to confirm it. But because the minds of men are obscured by familiarity with darkness, which covers them in the night of sins and evil habits, and cannot

perceive in a way suitable to the clearness and purity of reason, there is most wholesome provision for bringing the dazzled eye into the light of truth under the congenial shade of authority. But since we have to do with people who are perverse in all their thoughts and words and actions, and who insist on nothing more than on beginning with argument, I will, as a concession to them, take what I think a wrong method in discussion. For I like to imitate, as far as I can, the gentleness of my Lord Jesus Christ, who took on Himself the evil of death itself, wishing to free us from it.

### CHAPTER 3

HAPPINESS IS IN THE ENJOYMENT OF MAN'S CHIEF GOOD. TWO CONDITIONS OF THE CHIEF GOOD: 1ST, NOTHING IS BETTER THAN IT; 2D, IT CANNOT BE LOST AGAINST THE WILL

4. How then, according to reason, ought man to live? We all certainly desire to live happily; and there is no human being but assents to this statement almost before it is made. But the title happy cannot, in my opinion, belong either to him who has not what he loves, whatever it may be, or to him who has what he loves if it is hurtful or to him who does not love what he has, although it is good in perfection. For one who seeks what he cannot obtain suffers torture, and one who has got what is not desirable is cheated, and one who does not seek for what is worth seeking for is diseased. Now in all these cases the mind cannot but be unhappy, and happiness and unhappiness cannot reside at the same time in one man; so in none of these cases can the man be happy. I find, then, a fourth case, where the happy life exists,—when that which is man's chief good is both loved and possessed. For what do we call enjoyment but having at hand the objects of love? And no one can be happy who does not enjoy what is man's chief good, nor is there any one who enjoys this who is not happy. We must then have at hand our chief good, if we think of living happily.

5. We must now inquire what is man's chief good, which of course cannot be anything inferior to man himself. For whoever follows after what is inferior to himself, becomes himself inferior. But every man is bound to follow what is best. Wherefore man's chief good is not inferior to man. Is it then something similar to man himself? It must be so, if there is nothing above man which he is capable of enjoying. But if we find something which

is both superior to man, and can be possessed by the man who loves it, who can doubt that in seeking for happiness man should endeavor to reach that which is more excellent than the being who makes the endeavor. For if happiness consists in the enjoyment of a good than which there is nothing better, which we call the chief good, how can a man be properly called happy who has not yet attained to his chief good? or how can that be the chief good beyond which something better remains for us to arrive at? Such, then, being the chief good, it must be something which cannot be lost against the will. For no one can feel confident regarding a good which he knows can be taken from him, although he wishes to keep and cherish it. But if a man feels no confidence regarding the good which he enjoys, how can he be happy while in such fear of losing it?

#### CHAPTER 4

##### MAN—WHAT?

6. Let us then see what is better than man. This must necessarily be hard to find, unless we first ask and examine what man is. I am not now called upon to give a definition of man. The question here seems to me to be,—since almost all agree, or at least, which is enough, those I have now to do with are of the same opinion with me, that we are made up of soul and body,—What is man? Is he both of these? or is he the body only, or the soul only? For although the things are two, soul and body, and although neither without the other could be called man (for the body would not be man without the soul, nor again would the soul be man if there were not a body animated by it), still it is possible that one of these may be held to be man, and may be called so. What then do we call man? Is he soul and body, as in a double harness, or like a centaur? Or do we mean the body only, as being in the service of the soul which rules it, as the word lamp denotes not the light and the case together, but only the case, yet it is on account of the light that it is so called? Or do we mean only the mind, and that on account of the body which it rules, as horseman means not the man and the horse, but the man only, and that as employed in ruling the horse? This dispute is not easy to settle; or, if the proof is plain, the statement requires time. This is an expenditure of time and strength which we need not incur. For whether the name man belongs to both, or only to the soul, the chief good of man is not

the chief good of the body; but what is the chief good either of both soul and body, or of the soul only, that is man's chief good.

## CHAPTER 5

### MAN'S CHIEF GOOD IS NOT THE CHIEF GOOD OF THE BODY ONLY, BUT THE CHIEF GOOD OF THE SOUL

7. Now if we ask what is the chief good of the body, reason obliges us to admit that it is that by means of which the body comes to be in its best state. But of all the things which invigorate the body, there is nothing better or greater than the soul. The chief good of the body, then, is not bodily pleasure, not absence of pain, not strength, not beauty, not swiftness, or whatever else is usually reckoned among the goods of the body, but simply the soul. For all the things mentioned the soul supplies to the body by its presence, and, what is above them all, life. Hence I conclude that the soul is not the chief good of man, whether we give the name of man to soul and body together, or to the soul alone. For as according to reason, the chief good of the body is that which is better than the body, and from which the body receives vigor and life, so whether the soul itself is man, or soul and body both, we must discover whether there is anything which goes before the soul itself, in following which the soul comes to the perfection of good of which it is capable in its own kind. If such a thing can be found, all uncertainty must be at an end, and we must pronounce this to be really and truly the chief good of man.

8. If, again, the body is man, it must be admitted that the soul is the chief good of man. But clearly, when we treat of morals,—when we inquire what manner of life must be held in order to obtain happiness,—it is not the body to which the precepts are addressed, it is not bodily discipline which we discuss. In short, the observance of good customs belongs to that part of us which inquires and learns, which are the prerogatives of the soul; so, when we speak of attaining to virtue, the question does not regard the body. But if it follows, as it does, that the body which is ruled over by a soul possessed of virtue is ruled both better and more honorably, and is in its greatest perfection in consequence of the perfection of the soul which rightfully governs it, that which gives perfection to the soul will be man's chief good,



though we call the body man. For if my coachman, in obedience to me, feeds and drives the horses he has charge of in the most satisfactory manner, himself enjoying the more of my bounty in proportion to his good conduct, can any one deny that the good condition of the horses, as well as that of the coachman, is due to me? So the question seems to me to be not, whether soul and body is man, or the soul only, or the body only, but what gives perfection to the soul; for when this is obtained, a man cannot but be either perfect, or at least much better than in the absence of this one thing.

## CHAPTER 6

VIRTUE GIVES PERFECTION TO THE SOUL; THE SOUL OBTAINS VIRTUE BY FOLLOWING GOD; FOLLOWING GOD IS THE HAPPY LIFE

9. No one will question that virtue gives perfection to the soul. But it is a very proper subject of inquiry whether this virtue can exist by itself or only in the soul. Here again arises a profound discussion, needing lengthy treatment; but perhaps my summary will serve the purpose. God will, I trust, assist me, so that, notwithstanding our feebleness, we may give instruction on these great matters briefly as well as intelligibly. In either case, whether virtue can exist by itself without the soul, or can exist only in the soul, undoubtedly in the pursuit of virtue the soul follows after something, and this must be either the soul itself, or virtue, or something else. But if the soul follows after itself in the pursuit of virtue, it follows after a foolish thing; for before obtaining virtue it is foolish. Now the height of a follower's desire is to reach that which he follows after. So the soul must either not wish to reach what it follows after, which is utterly absurd and unreasonable, or, in following after itself while foolish, it reaches the folly which it flees from. But if it follows after virtue in the desire to reach it, how can it follow what does not exist? or how can it desire to reach what it already possesses? Either, therefore, virtue exists beyond the soul, or if we are not allowed to give the name of virtue except to the habit and disposition of the wise soul, which can exist only in the soul, we must allow that the soul follows after something else in order that virtue may be produced in itself; for neither by following after nothing, nor by following after folly, can the soul, according to my reasoning, attain to wisdom.

10. This something else then, by following after which the soul becomes possessed of virtue and wisdom, is either a wise man or God. But we have said already that it must be something that we cannot lose against our will. No one can think it necessary to ask whether a wise man, supposing we are content to follow after him, can be taken from us in spite of our unwillingness or our persistence. God then remains, in following after whom we live well, and in reaching whom we live both well and happily. If any deny God's existence, why should I consider the method of dealing with them, when it is doubtful whether they ought to be dealt with at all? At any rate, it would require a different starting-point, a different plan, a different investigation from what we are now engaged in. I am now addressing those who do not deny the existence of God, and who, moreover, allow that human affairs are not disregarded by Him. For there is no one, I suppose, who makes any profession of religion but will hold that divine Providence cares at least for our souls.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD TO BE OBTAINED FROM THE SCRIPTURE. THE PLAN AND PRINCIPAL MYSTERIES OF THE DIVINE SCHEME OF REDEMPTION

11. But how can we follow after Him whom we do not see? or how can we see Him, we who are not only men, but also men of weak understanding? For though God is seen not with the eyes but with the mind, where can such a mind be found as shall, while obscured by foolishness, succeed or even attempt to drink in that light? We must therefore have recourse to the instructions of those whom we have reason to think wise. Thus far argument brings us. For in human things reasoning is employed, not as of greater certainty, but as easier from use. But when we come to divine things, this faculty turns away; it cannot behold; it pants, and gasps, and burns with desire; it falls back from the light of truth, and turns again to its wonted obscurity, not from choice, but from exhaustion. What a dreadful catastrophe is this, that the soul should be reduced to greater helplessness when it is seeking rest from its toil! So, when we are hasting to retire into darkness, it will be well that by the appointment of adorable Wisdom we should be met by the friendly shade of authority, and should be attracted by

the wonderful character of its contents, and by the utterances of its pages, which, like shadows, typify and attemper the truth.

12. What more could have been done for our salvation? What can be more gracious and bountiful than divine providence, which, when man had fallen from its laws, and, in just retribution for his coveting mortal things, had brought forth a mortal offspring, still did not wholly abandon him? For in this most righteous government, whose ways are strange and inscrutable, there is, by means of unknown connections established in the creatures subject to it, both a severity of punishment and a mercifulness of salvation. How beautiful this is, how great, how worthy of God, in fine, how true, which is all we are seeking for, we shall never be able to perceive, unless, beginning with things human and at hand, and holding by the faith and the precepts of true religion, we continue without turning from it in the way which God has secured for us by the separation of the patriarchs, by the bond of the law, by the foresight of the prophets, by the witness of the apostles, by the blood of the martyrs, and by the subjugation of the Gentiles. From this point, then, let no one ask me for my opinion, but let us rather hear the oracles, and submit our weak inferences to the announcements of Heaven.

## CHAPTER 8

### GOD IS THE CHIEF GOOD, WHOM WE ARE TO SEEK AFTER WITH SUPREME AFFECTION

13. Let us see how the Lord Himself in the gospel has taught us to live; how, too, Paul the apostle,—for the Manichaeans dare not reject these Scriptures. Let us hear, O Christ, what chief end Thou dost prescribe to us; and that is evidently the chief end after which we are told to strive with supreme affection. “Thou shalt love,” He says, “the Lord thy God.” Tell me also, I pray Thee, what must be the measure of love; for I fear lest the desire enkindled in my heart should either exceed or come short in fervor. “With all thy heart,” He says. Nor is that enough. “With all thy soul.” Nor is it enough yet. “With all thy mind.” What do you wish more? I might, perhaps, wish more if I could see the possibility of more. What does Paul say on this? “We know,” he says, “that all things issue in good to them that love

God.” Let him, too, say what is the measure of love. “Who then,” he says, “shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?” We have heard, then, what and how much we must love; this we must strive after, and to this we must refer all our plans. The perfection of all our good things and our perfect good is God. We must neither come short of this nor go beyond it: the one is dangerous, the other impossible.

## CHAPTER 9

### HARMONY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT ON THE PRECEPTS OF CHARITY

14. Come now, let us examine, or rather let us take notice,—for it is obvious and can be seen, at once,—whether the authority of the Old Testament too agrees with those statements taken from the gospel and the apostle. What need to speak of the first statement, when it is clear to all that it is a quotation from the law given by Moses? For it is there written, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” And not to go farther for a passage of the Old Testament to compare with that of the apostle, he has himself added one. For after saying that no tribulation, no distress, no persecution, no pressure of bodily want, no peril, no sword, separates us from the love of Christ, he immediately adds, “As it is written, For Thy sake we are in suffering all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” The Manichaeans are in the habit of saying that this is an interpolation,—so unable are they to reply, that they are forced in their extremity to say this. But every one can see that this is all that is left for men to say when it is proved that they are wrong.

15. And yet I ask them if they deny that this is said in the Old Testament, or if they hold that the passage in the Old Testament does not agree with that of the apostle. For the first, the books will prove it; and as for the second, those prevaricators who fly off at a tangent will be brought to agree with me, if they will only reflect a little and consider what is said, or else I will press upon them the opinion of those who judge impartially. For what could agree more harmoniously than these passages? For tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, cause great suffering to man while in

this life. So all these words are implied in the single quotation from the law, where it is said, “For Thy sake we are in suffering.” The only other thing is the sword, which does not inflict a painful life, but removes whatever life it meets with. Answering to this are the words, “We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” And love could not have been more plainly expressed than by the words, “For Thy sake.” Suppose, then, that this testimony is not found in the Apostle Paul, but is quoted by me, must you not prove, you heretic, either that this is not written in the old law, or that it does not harmonize with the apostle? And if you dare not say either of these things (for you are shut up by the reading of the manuscript, which will show that it is written, and by common sense, which sees that nothing could agree better with what is said by the apostle), why do you imagine that there is any force in accusing the Scriptures of being corrupted? And once more, what will you reply to a man who says to you, This is what I understand, this is my view, this is my belief, and I read these books only because I see that everything in them agrees with the Christian faith? Or tell me at once if you will venture deliberately to tell me to the face that we are not to believe that the apostles and martyrs are spoken of as having endured great sufferings for Christ’s sake, and as having been accounted by their persecutors as sheep for the slaughter? If you cannot say this, why should you bring a charge against the book in which I find what you acknowledge I ought to believe?

## CHAPTER 10

### WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES ABOUT GOD. THE TWO GODS OF THE MANICHAEANS

16. Will you say that you grant that we are bound to love God, but not the God worshipped by those who acknowledge the authority of the Old Testament? In that case you refuse to worship the God who made heaven and earth, for this is the God set forth all through these books. And you admit that the whole of the world, which is called heaven and earth, had God and a good God for its author and maker. For in speaking to you about God we must make a distinction. For you hold that there are two gods, one good and the other bad.

But if you say that you worship and approve of worshipping the God who made heaven and earth, but not the God supported by the authority of the Old Testament, you act impertinently in trying, though vainly, to attribute to us views and opinions altogether unlike the wholesome and profitable doctrine we really hold. Nor can your silly and profane discourses be at all compared with the expositions in which learned and pious men of the Catholic Church open up those Scriptures to the willing and worthy. Our understanding of the law and the prophets is quite different from what you suppose. Mistake us no longer. We do not worship a God who repents, or is envious, or needy, or cruel, or who takes pleasure in the blood of men or beasts, or is pleased with guilt and crime, or whose possession of the earth is limited to a little corner of it. These and such like are the silly notions you are in the habit of denouncing at great length. Your denunciation does not touch us. The fancies of old women or of children you attack with a vehemence that is only ridiculous. Any one whom you persuade in this way to join you shows no fault in the teaching of the Church, but only proves his own ignorance of it.

17. If, then, you have any human feeling,—if you have any regard for your own welfare,—you should rather examine with diligence and piety the meaning of these passages of Scripture. You should examine, unhappy beings that you are; for we condemn with no less severity and copiousness any faith which attributes to God what is unbecoming Him, and in those by whom these passages are literally understood we correct the mistake of ignorance, and look upon persistence in it as absurd. And in many other things which you cannot understand there is in the Catholic teaching a check on the belief of those who have got beyond mental childishness, not in years, but in knowledge and understanding—old in the progress towards wisdom. For we learn the folly of believing that God is bounded by any amount of space, even though infinite; and it is held unlawful to think of God, or any part of Him, as moving from one place to another. And should any one suppose that anything in God's substance or nature can suffer change or conversion, he will be held guilty of wild profanity. There are thus among us children who think of God as having a human form, which they suppose He really has, which is a most degrading idea; and there are many of full age to whose mind the majesty of God appears in its

inviolableness and unchangeableness as not only above the human body, but above their own mind itself. These ages, as we said, are distinguished not by time, but by virtue and discretion. Among you, again, there is no one who will picture God in a human form; but neither is there one who sets God apart from the contamination of human error. As regards those who are fed like crying babies at the breast of the Catholic Church, if they are not carried off by heretics, they are nourished according to the vigor and capacity of each, and arrive at last, one in one way and another in another, first to a perfect man, and then to the maturity and hoary hairs of wisdom, when they may get life as they desire, and life in perfect happiness.

#### CHAPTER 11

GOD IS THE ONE OBJECT OF LOVE; THEREFORE HE IS MAN'S CHIEF GOOD. NOTHING IS BETTER THAN GOD. GOD CANNOT BE LOST AGAINST OUR WILL

18. Following after God is the desire of happiness; to reach God is happiness itself. We follow after God by loving Him; we reach Him, not by becoming entirely what He is, but in nearness to Him, and in wonderful and immaterial contact with Him, and in being inwardly illuminated and occupied by His truth and holiness. He is light itself; we get enlightenment from Him. The greatest commandment, therefore, which leads to happy life, and the first, is this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind." For to those who love the Lord all things issue in good. Hence Paul adds shortly after, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor virtue, nor things present, nor things future, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If, then, to those who love God all things issue in good, and if, as no one doubts, the chief or perfect good is not only to be loved, but to be loved so that nothing shall be loved better, as is expressed in the words, "With all thy soul, with all thy heart, and with all thy mind," who, I ask, will not at once conclude, when these things are all settled and most surely believed, that our chief good which we must hasten to arrive at in preference to all other things is nothing else than God? And then, if nothing can separate us from His love, must not this be surer as well as better than any other good?

19. But let us consider the points separately. No one separates us from this by threatening death. For that with which we love God cannot die, except in not loving God; for death is not to love God, and that is when we prefer anything to Him in affection and pursuit. No one separates us from this in promising life; for no one separates us from the fountain in promising water. Angels do not separate us; for the mind cleaving to God is not inferior in strength to an angel. Virtue does not separate us; for if what is here called virtue is that which has power in this world, the mind cleaving to God is far above the whole world. Or if this virtue is perfect rectitude of our mind itself, this in the case of another will favor our union with God, and in ourselves will itself unite us with God. Present troubles do not separate us; for we feel their burden less the closer we cling to Him from whom they try to separate us. The promise of future things does not separate us; for both future good of every kind is surest in the promise of God, and nothing is better than God Himself, who undoubtedly is already present to those who truly cleave to Him. Height and depth do not separate us; for if the height and depth of knowledge are what is meant, I will rather not be inquisitive than be separated from God; nor can any instruction by which error is removed separate me from Him, by separation from whom it is that any one is in error. Or if what is meant are the higher and lower parts of this world, how can the promise of heaven separate me from Him who made heaven? Or who from beneath can frighten me into forsaking God, when I should not have known of things beneath but by forsaking Him? In fine, what place can remove me from His love, when He could not be all in every place unless He were contained in none?

## CHAPTER 12

### WE ARE UNITED TO GOD BY LOVE, IN SUBJECTION TO HIM

20. “No other creature,” he says, separates us. O man of profound mysteries! He thought it not enough to say, no creature: but he says no other creature; teaching that with which we love God and by which we cleave to God, our mind, namely, and understanding, is itself a creature. Thus the body is another creature; and if the mind is an object of intellectual perception, and is known only by this means, the other creature is all that is an object of sense, which as it were makes itself known through the eyes, or



ears, or smell, or taste, or touch, and this must be inferior to what is perceived by the intellect alone. Now, as God also can be known by the worthy, only intellectually, exalted though He is above the intelligent mind as being its Creator and Author, there was danger lest the human mind, from being reckoned among invisible and immaterial things, should be thought to be of the same nature with Him who created it, and so should fall away by pride from Him to whom it should be united by love. For the mind becomes like God, to the extent vouchsafed by its subjection of itself to Him for information and enlightenment. And if it obtains the greatest nearness by that subjection which produces likeness, it must be far removed from Him by that presumption which would make the likeness greater. It is this presumption which leads the mind to refuse obedience to the laws of God, in the desire to be sovereign, as God is.

21. The farther, then, the mind departs from God, not in space, but in affection and lust after things below Him, the more it is filled with folly and wretchedness. So by love it returns to God,—a love which places it not along with God, but under Him. And the more ardor and eagerness there is in this, the happier and more elevated will the mind be, and with God as sole governor it will be in perfect liberty. Hence it must know that it is a creature. It must believe what is the truth,—that its Creator remains ever possessed of the inviolable and immutable nature of truth and wisdom, and must confess, even in view of the errors from which it desires deliverance, that it is liable to folly and falsehood. But then again, it must take care that it be not separated by the love of the other creature, that is, of this visible world, from the love of God Himself, which sanctifies it in order to lasting happiness. No other creature, then,—for we are ourselves a creature,—separates us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## CHAPTER 13

### WE ARE JOINED INSEPARABLY TO GOD BY CHRIST AND HIS SPIRIT

22. Let this same Paul tell us who is this Christ Jesus our Lord. “To them that are called,” he says, “we preach Christ the virtue of God, and the wisdom of God.” And does not Christ Himself say, “I am the truth?” If, then, we ask what it is to live well,—that is, to strive after happiness by

living well,—it must assuredly be to love virtue, to love wisdom, to love truth, and to love with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind; virtue which is inviolable and immutable, wisdom which never gives place to folly, truth which knows no change or variation from its uniform character. Through this the Father Himself is seen; for it is said, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” To this we cleave by sanctification. For when sanctified we burn with full and perfect love, which is the only security for our not turning away from God, and for our being conformed to Him rather than to this world; for “He has predestinated us,” says the same apostle, “that we should be conformed to the image of His Son.”

23. It is through love, then, that we become conformed to God; and by this conformation, and configuration, and circumcision from this world we are not confounded with the things which are properly subject to us. And this is done by the Holy Spirit. “For hope,” he says, “does not confound us; for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us.” But we could not possibly be restored to perfection by the Holy Spirit, unless He Himself continued always perfect and immutable. And this plainly could not be unless He were of the nature and of the very substance of God, who alone is always possessed of immutability and invariableness. “The creature,” it is affirmed, not by me but by Paul, “has been made subject to vanity.” And what is subject to vanity is unable to separate us from vanity, and to unite us to the truth. But the Holy Spirit does this for us. He is therefore no creature. For whatever is, must be either God or the creature.

#### CHAPTER 14

##### WE CLEAVE TO THE TRINITY, OUR CHIEF GOOD, BY LOVE

24. We ought then to love God, the Trinity in unity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; for this must be said to be God Himself, for it is said of God, truly and in the most exalted sense, “Of whom are all things, by whom are all things, in whom are all things.” Those are Paul’s words. And what does he add? “To Him be glory.” All this is exactly true. He does not say, To them; for God is one. And what is meant by, To Him be glory, but to Him be chief and perfect and widespread praise? For as the praise improves and extends,

so the love and affection increases in fervor. And when this is the case, mankind cannot but advance with sure and firm step to a life of perfection and bliss. This, I suppose, is all we wish to find when we speak of the chief good of man, to which all must be referred in life and conduct. For the good plainly exists; and we have shown by reasoning, as far as we were able, and by the divine authority which goes beyond our reasoning, that it is nothing else but God Himself. For how can any thing be man's chief good but that in cleaving to which he is blessed? Now this is nothing but God, to whom we can cleave only by affection, desire, and love.

## CHAPTER 15

### THE CHRISTIAN DEFINITION OF THE FOUR VIRTUES

25. As to virtue leading us to a happy life, I hold virtue to be nothing else than perfect love of God. For the fourfold division of virtue I regard as taken from four forms of love. For these four virtues (would that all felt their influence in their minds as they have their names in their mouths!), I should have no hesitation in defining them: that temperance is love giving itself entirely to that which is loved; fortitude is love readily bearing all things for the sake of the loved object; justice is love serving only the loved object, and therefore ruling rightly; prudence is love distinguishing with sagacity between what hinders it and what helps it. The object of this love is not anything, but only God, the chief good, the highest wisdom, the perfect harmony. So we may express the definition thus: that temperance is love keeping itself entire and incorrupt for God; fortitude is love bearing everything readily for the sake of God; justice is love serving God only, and therefore ruling well all else, as subject to man; prudence is love making a right distinction between what helps it towards God and what might hinder it.

## CHAPTER 16

### HARMONY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

26. I will briefly set forth the manner of life according to these virtues, one by one, after I have brought forward, as I promised, passages from the Old Testament parallel to those I have been quoting from the New Testament.

For is Paul alone in saying that we should be joined to God so that there should be nothing between to separate us? Does not the prophet say the same most aptly and concisely in the words, “It is good for me to cleave to God?” Does not this one word cleave express all that the apostle says at length about love? And do not the words, It is good, point to the apostle’s statement, “All things issue in good to them that love God?” Thus in one clause and in two words the prophet sets forth the power and the fruit of love.

27. And as the apostle says that the Son of God is the virtue of God and the wisdom of God,—virtue being understood to refer to action, and wisdom to teaching (as in the gospel these two things are expressed in the words, “All things were made by Him,” which belongs to action and virtue; and then, referring to teaching and the knowledge of the truth, he says, “The life was the light of men” ),—could anything agree better with these passages than what is said in the Old Testament of wisdom, “She reaches from end to end in strength, and orders all things sweetly?” For reaching in strength expresses virtue, while ordering sweetly expresses skill and method. But if this seems obscure, see what follows: “And of all,” he says, “God loved her; for she teaches the knowledge of God, and chooses His works.” Nothing more is found here about action; for choosing works is not the same as working, so this refers to teaching. There remains action to correspond with the virtue, to complete the truth we wish to prove. Read then what comes next: “But if,” he says, “the possession which is desired in life is honorable, what is more honorable than wisdom, which works all things?” Could anything be brought forward more striking or more distinct than this, or even more fully expressed? Or, if you wish more, hear another passage of the same meaning. “Wisdom,” he says, “teaches sobriety, and justice, and virtue.” Sobriety refers, I think, to the knowledge of the truth, or to teaching; justice and virtue to work and action. And I know nothing comparable to these two things, that is, to efficiency in action and sobriety in contemplation, which the virtue of God and the wisdom of God, that is, the Son of God, gives to them that love Him, when the same prophet goes on to show their value; for it is thus stated: “Wisdom teaches sobriety, and justice, and virtue, than which nothing is more useful in life to man.”

28. Perhaps some may think that those passages do not refer to the Son of God. What, then, is taught in the following words: “She displays the nobility of her birth, having her dwelling with God?” To what does birth refer but to parentage? And does not dwelling with the Father claim and assert equality? Again, as Paul says that the Son of God is the wisdom of God, and as the Lord Himself says, “No man knoweth the Father save the only-begotten Son,” what could be more concordant than those words of the prophet: “With Thee is wisdom which knows Thy works, which was present at the time of Thy making the world, and knew what would be pleasing in Thine eyes?” And as Christ is called the truth, which is also taught by His being called the brightness of the Father (for there is nothing round about the sun but its brightness which is produced from it), what is there in the Old Testament more plainly and obviously in accordance with this than the words, “Thy truth is round about Thee?” Once more, Wisdom herself says in the gospel, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me;” and the prophet says, “Who knoweth Thy mind, unless Thou givest wisdom?” and a little after, “The things pleasing to Thee men have learned, and have been healed by wisdom.”

29. Paul says, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us;” and the prophet says, “The Holy Spirit of knowledge will shun guile.” For where there is guile there is no love. Paul says that we are “conformed to the image of the Son of God;” and the prophet says, “The light of Thy countenance is stamped upon us.” Paul teaches that the Holy Spirit is God, and therefore is no creature; and the prophet says, “Thou sendest Thy Spirit from the higher.” For God alone is the highest, than whom nothing is higher. Paul shows that the Trinity is one God, when he says, “To Him be glory;” and in the Old Testament it is said, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God.”

## CHAPTER 17

### APPEAL TO THE MANICHAEANS, CALLING ON THEM TO REPENT

30. What more do you wish? Why do you resist ignorantly and obstinately? Why do you pervert untutored minds by your mischievous teaching? The God of both Testaments is one. For as there is an agreement in the passages

quoted from both, so is there in all the rest, if you are willing to consider them carefully and impartially. But because many expressions are undignified, and so far adapted to minds creeping on the earth, that they may rise by human things to divine, while many are figurative, that the inquiring mind may have the more profit from the exertion of finding their meaning, and the more delight when it is found, you pervert this admirable arrangement of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of deceiving and ensnaring your followers. As to the reason why divine Providence permits you to do this, and as to the truth of the apostle's saying, "There must needs be many heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you," it would take long to discuss these things, and you, with whom we have now to do, are not capable of understanding them. I know you well. To the consideration of divine things, which are far higher than you suppose, you bring minds quite gross and sickly, from being fed with material images.

31. We must therefore in your case try not to make you understand divine things, which is impossible, but to make you desire to understand. This is the work of the pure and guileless love of God, which is seen chiefly in the conduct, and of which we have already said much. This love, inspired by the Holy Spirit, leads to the Son, that is, to the wisdom of God, by which the Father Himself is known. For if wisdom and truth are not sought for with the whole strength of the mind, it cannot possibly be found. But when it is sought as it deserves to be, it cannot withdraw or hide itself from its lovers. Hence its words, which you too are in the habit of repeating, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:" "Nothing is hid which shall not be revealed." It is love that asks, love that seeks, love that knocks, love that reveals, love, too, that gives continuance in what is revealed. From this love of wisdom, and this studious inquiry, we are not debarred by the Old Testament, as you always say most falsely, but are exhorted to this with the greatest urgency.

32. Hear, then, at length, and consider, I pray you, what is said by the prophet: "Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away; yea, she is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her. She preventeth them that desire her, in making herself first known unto them. Whoso seeketh her early shall have no great travail; for he shall find her sitting at

his doors. To think, therefore, upon her is perfection of wisdom; and whoso watcheth for her shall quickly be without care. For she goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, showeth herself favorably unto them in the ways, and meeteth them in every thought. For the very true beginning of her is the desire of discipline; and the care of discipline is love; and love is the keeping of her laws; and the giving heed unto her laws is the assurance of incorruption; and incorruption maketh us near unto God. Therefore the desire of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom.” Will you still continue in dogged hostility to these things? Do not things thus stated, though not yet understood, make it evident to every one that they contain something deep and unutterable? Would that you could understand the things here said! Forthwith you would abjure all your silly legends and your unmeaning material imaginations, and with great alacrity, sincere love, and full assurance of faith, would betake yourselves bodily to the shelter of the most holy bosom of the Catholic Church.

## CHAPTER 18

### ONLY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS PERFECT TRUTH ESTABLISHED ON THE HARMONY OF BOTH TESTAMENTS

33. I could, according to the little ability I have, take up the points separately, and could expound and prove the truths I have learned, which are generally more excellent and lofty than words can express; but this cannot be done while you bark at it. For not in vain is it said, “Give not that which is holy to dogs.” Do not be angry. I too barked and was a dog; and then, as was right, instead of the food of teaching, I got the rod of correction. But were there in you that love of which we are speaking, or should it ever be in you as much as the greatness of the truth to be known requires, may God vouchsafe to show you that neither is there among the Manichaeans the Christian faith which leads to the summit of wisdom and truth, the attainment of which is the true happy life, nor is it anywhere but in the Catholic teaching. Is not this what the Apostle Paul appears to desire when he says, “For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant unto you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man: that Christ may

dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the height, and length, and breadth, and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God?" Could anything be more plainly expressed?

34. Wake up a little, I beseech you, and see the harmony of both Testaments, making it quite plain and certain what should be the manner of life in our conduct, and to what all things should be referred. To the love of God we are incited by the gospel, when it is said, "Ask, seek, knock;" by Paul, when he says, "That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend;" by the prophet also, when he says that wisdom can easily be known by those who love it, seek for it, desire it, watch for it, think about it, care for it. The salvation of the mind and the way of happiness is pointed out by the concord of both Scriptures; and yet you choose rather to bark at these things than to obey them. I will tell you in one word what I think. Do you listen to the learned men of the Catholic Church with as peaceable a disposition, and with the same zeal, that I had when for nine years I attended on you: there will be no need of so long a time as that during which you made a fool of me. In a much, a very much, shorter time you will see the difference between truth and vanity.

## CHAPTER 19

### DESCRIPTION OF THE DUTIES OF TEMPERANCE, ACCORDING TO THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

35. It is now time to return to the four virtues, and to draw out and prescribe a way of life in conformity with them, taking each separately. First, then, let us consider temperance, which promises us a kind of integrity and incorruption in the love by which we are united to God. The office of temperance is in restraining and quieting the passions which make us pant for those things which turn us away from the laws of God and from the enjoyment of His goodness, that is, in a word, from the happy life. For there is the abode of truth; and in enjoying its contemplation, and in cleaving closely to it, we are assuredly happy; but departing from this, men become entangled in great errors and sorrows. For, as the apostle says, "The root of



all evils is covetousness; which some having followed, have made shipwreck of the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” And this sin of the soul is quite plainly, to those rightly understanding, set forth in the Old Testament in the transgression of Adam in Paradise. Thus, as the apostle says, “In Adam we all die, and in Christ we shall all rise again.” Oh, the depth of these mysteries! But I refrain; for I am now engaged not in teaching you the truth, but in making you unlearn your errors, if I can, that is, if God aid my purpose regarding you.

36. Paul then says that covetousness is the root of all evils; and by covetousness the old law also intimates that the first man fell. Paul tells us to put off the old man and put on the new. By the old man he means Adam who sinned, and by the new man him whom the Son of God took to Himself in consecration for our redemption. For he says in another place, “The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven, heavenly. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, let us also bear the image of the heavenly,”—that is, put off the old man, and put on the new. The whole duty of temperance, then, is to put off the old man, and to be renewed in God,—that is, to scorn all bodily delights, and the popular applause, and to turn the whole love to things divine and unseen. Hence that following passage which is so admirable: “Though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day.” Hear, too, the prophet singing, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” What can be said against such harmony except by blind barkers?

## CHAPTER 20

### WE ARE REQUIRED TO DESPISE ALL SENSIBLE THINGS, AND TO LOVE GOD ALONE

37. Bodily delights have their source in all those things with which the bodily sense comes in contact, and which are by some called the objects of sense; and among these the noblest is light, in the common meaning of the word, because among our senses also, which the mind uses in acting through the body, there is nothing more valuable than the eyes, and so in the Holy Scriptures all the objects of sense are spoken of as visible things. Thus

in the New Testament we are warned against the love of these things in the following words: “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” This shows how far from being Christians those are who hold that the sun and moon are to be not only loved but worshipped. For what is seen if the sun and moon are not? But we are forbidden to regard things which are seen. The man, therefore, who wishes to offer that incorrupt love to God must not love these things too. This subject I will inquire into more particularly elsewhere. Here my plan is to write not of faith, but of the life by which we become worthy of knowing what we believe. God then alone is to be loved; and all this world, that is, all sensible things, are to be despised,—while, however, they are to be used as this life requires.

## CHAPTER 21

### POPULAR RENOWN AND INQUISITIVENESS ARE CONDEMNED IN THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

38. Popular renown is thus slighted and scorned in the New Testament: “If I wished,” says St. Paul, “to please men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” Again, there is another production of the soul formed by imaginations derived from material things, and called the knowledge of things. In reference to this we are fitly warned against inquisitiveness to correct which is the great function of temperance. Thus it is said, “Take heed lest any one seduce you by philosophy.” And because the word philosophy originally means the love and pursuit of wisdom, a thing of great value and to be sought with the whole mind, the apostle, with great prudence, that he might not be thought to deter from the love of wisdom, has added the words, “And the elements of this world.” For some people, neglecting virtues, and ignorant of what God is, and of the majesty of nature which remains always the same, think that they are engaged in an important business when searching with the greatest inquisitiveness and eagerness into this material mass which we call the world. This begets so much pride, that they look upon themselves as inhabitants of the heaven of which they often discourse. The soul, then, which purposes to keep itself chaste for God must refrain from the desire of vain knowledge like this. For this desire

usually produces delusion, so that the soul thinks that nothing exists but what is material; or if, from regard to authority, it confesses that there is an immaterial existence, it can think of it only under material images, and has no belief regarding it but that imposed by the bodily sense. We may apply to this the precept about fleeing from idolatry.

39. To this New Testament authority, requiring us not to love anything in this world, especially in that passage where it is said, “Be not conformed to this world,”—for the point is to show that a man is conformed to whatever he loves,—to this authority, then, if I seek for a parallel passage in the Old Testament, I find several; but there is one book of Solomon, called Ecclesiastes, which at great length brings all earthly things into utter contempt. The book begins thus: “Vanity of the vain, saith the Preacher, vanity of the vain; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?” If all these words are considered, weighed, and thoroughly examined, many things are found of essential importance to those who seek to flee from the world and to take shelter in God; but this requires time and our discourse hastens on to other topics. But, after this beginning, he goes on to show in detail that the vain are those who are deceived by things of this sort; and he calls this which deceives them vanity,—not that God did not create those things, but because men choose to subject themselves by their sins to those things, which the divine law has made subject to them in well-doing. For when you consider things beneath yourself to be admirable and desirable, what is this but to be cheated and misled by unreal goods? The man, then, who is temperate in such mortal and transient things has his rule of life confirmed by both Testaments, that he should love none of these things, nor think them desirable for their own sakes, but should use them as far as is required for the purposes and duties of life, with the moderation of an employer instead of the ardor of a lover. These remarks on temperance are few in proportion to the greatness of the theme, but perhaps too many in view of the task on hand.

## CHAPTER 22

### FORTITUDE COMES FROM THE LOVE OF GOD

40. On fortitude we must be brief. The love, then, of which we speak, which ought with all sanctity to burn in desire for God, is called temperance, in not seeking for earthly things, and fortitude in bearing the loss of them. But among all things which are possessed in this life, the body is, by God's most righteous laws, for the sin of old, man's heaviest bond, which is well known as a fact but most incomprehensible in its mystery. Lest this bond should be shaken and disturbed, the soul is shaken with the fear of toil and pain; lest it should be lost and destroyed, the soul is shaken with the fear of death. For the soul loves it from the force of habit, not knowing that by using it well and wisely its resurrection and reformation will, by the divine help and decree, be without any trouble made subject to its authority. But when the soul turns to God wholly in this love, it knows these things, and so will not only disregard death, but will even desire it.

41. Then there is the great struggle with pain. But there is nothing, though of iron hardness, which the fire of love cannot subdue. And when the mind is carried up to God in this love, it will soar above all torture free and glorious, with wings beauteous and unhurt, on which chaste love rises to the embrace of God. Otherwise God must allow the lovers of gold, the lovers of praise, the lovers of women, to have more fortitude than the lovers of Himself, though love in those cases is rather to be called passion or lust. And yet even here we may see with what force the mind presses on with unflagging energy, in spite of all alarms, towards that it loves; and we learn that we should bear all things rather than forsake God, since those men bear so much in order to forsake Him.

## CHAPTER 23

### SCRIPTURE PRECEPTS AND EXAMPLES OF FORTITUDE

42. Instead of quoting here authorities from the New Testament, where it is said, "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience and experience, hope;" and where, in addition to these words, there is proof and confirmation of them from the example of those who spoke them; I will rather summon an example of patience from the Old Testament, against which the Manichaeans make fierce assaults. Nor will I refer to the man who, in the midst of great bodily suffering, and with a dreadful disease in

his limbs, not only bore human evils, but discoursed of things divine. Whoever gives considerate attention to the utterances of this man, will learn from every one of them what value is to be attached to those things which men try to keep in their power, and in so doing are themselves brought by passion into bondage, so that they become the slaves of mortal things, while seeking ignorantly to be their masters. This man, in the loss of all his wealth, and on being suddenly reduced to the greatest poverty, kept his mind so unshaken and fixed upon God, as to manifest that these things were not great in his view, but that he was great in relation to them, and God to him. If this mind were to be found in men in our day, we should not be so strongly cautioned in the New Testament against the possession of these things in order that we may be perfect; for to have these things without cleaving to them is much more admirable than not to have them at all.

43. But since we are speaking here of bearing pain and bodily sufferings, I pass from this man, great as he was, indomitable as he was: this is the case of a man. But these Scriptures present to me a woman of amazing fortitude, and I must at once go on to her case. This woman, along with seven children, allowed the tyrant and executioner to extract her vitals from her body rather than a profane word from her mouth, encouraging her sons by her exhortations, though she suffered in the tortures of their bodies, and was herself to undergo what she called on them to bear. What patience could be greater than this? And yet why should we be astonished that the love of God, implanted in her inmost heart, bore up against tyrant, and executioner, and pain, and sex, and natural affection? Had she not heard, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints?" Had she not heard, "A patient man is better than the mightiest?" Had she not heard, "All that is appointed thee receive; and in pain bear it; and in abasement keep thy patience: for in fire are gold and silver tried?" Had she not heard, "The fire tries the vessels of the potter, and for just men is the trial of tribulation?" These she knew, and many other precepts of fortitude written in these books, which alone existed at that time, by the same divine Spirit who writes those in the New Testament.

## CHAPTER 24

### OF JUSTICE AND PRUDENCE

44. What of justice that pertains to God? As the Lord says, “Ye cannot serve two masters,” and the apostle denounces those who serve the creature rather than the Creator, was it not said before in the Old Testament, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve?” I need say no more on this, for these books are full of such passages. The lover, then, whom we are describing, will get from justice this rule of life, that he must with perfect readiness serve the God whom he loves, the highest good, the highest wisdom, the highest peace; and as regards all other things, must either rule them as subject to himself, or treat them with a view to their subjection. This rule of life, is, as we have shown, confirmed by the authority of both Testaments.

45. With equal brevity we must treat of prudence, to which it belongs to discern between what is to be desired and what to be shunned. Without this, nothing can be done of what we have already spoken of. It is the part of prudence to keep watch with most anxious vigilance, lest any evil influence should stealthily creep in upon us. Thus the Lord often exclaims, “Watch;” and He says, “Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.” And then it is said, “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” And no passage can be quoted from the Old Testament more expressly condemning this mental somnolence, which makes us insensible to destruction advancing on us step by step, than those words of the prophet, “He who despiseth small things shall fall by degrees.” On this topic I might discourse at length did our haste allow of it. And did our present task demand it, we might perhaps prove the depth of these mysteries, by making a mock of which profane men in their perfect ignorance fall, not certainly by degrees, but with a headlong overthrow.

## CHAPTER 25

### FOUR MORAL DUTIES REGARDING THE LOVE OF GOD, OF WHICH LOVE THE REWARD IS ETERNAL LIFE AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH

46. I need say no more about right conduct. For if God is man’s chief good, which you cannot deny, it clearly follows, since to seek the chief good is to live well, that to live well is nothing else but to love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind; and, as arising from this, that this love

must be preserved entire and incorrupt, which is the part of temperance; that it give way before no troubles, which is the part of fortitude; that it serve no other, which is the part of justice; that it be watchful in its inspection of things lest craft or fraud steal in, which is the part of prudence. This is the one perfection of man, by which alone he can succeed in attaining to the purity of truth. This both Testaments enjoin in concert; this is commended on both sides alike. Why do you continue to cast reproaches on Scriptures of which you are ignorant? Do you not see the folly of your attack upon books which only those who do not understand them find fault with, and which only those who find fault fail in understanding? For neither can an enemy know them, nor can one who knows them be other than a friend to them.

47. Let us then, as many as have in view to reach eternal life, love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind. For eternal life contains the whole reward in the promise of which we rejoice; nor can the reward precede desert, nor be given to a man before he is worthy of it. What can be more unjust than this, and what is more just than God? We should not then demand the reward before we deserve to get it. Here, perhaps, it is not out of place to ask what is eternal life; or rather let us hear the Bestower of it: "This," He says, "is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." So eternal life is the knowledge of the truth. See, then, how perverse and preposterous is the character of those who think that their teaching of the knowledge of God will make us perfect, when this is the reward of those already perfect! What else, then, have we to do but first to love with full affection Him whom we desire to know? Hence arises that principle on which we have all along insisted, that there is nothing more wholesome in the Catholic Church than using authority before argument.

## CHAPTER 26

### LOVE OF OURSELVES AND OF OUR NEIGHBOR

48. To proceed to what remains. It may be thought that there is nothing here about man himself, the lover. But to think this, shows a want of clear perception. For it is impossible for one who loves God not to love himself.

For he alone has a proper love for himself who aims diligently at the attainment of the chief and true good; and if this is nothing else but God, as has been shown, what is to prevent one who loves God from loving himself? And then, among men should there be no bond of mutual love? Yea, verily; so that we can think of no surer step towards the love of God than the love of man to man.

49. Let the Lord then supply us with the other precept in answer to the question about the precepts of life; for He was not satisfied with one as knowing that God is one thing and man another, and that the difference is nothing less than that between the Creator and the thing created in the likeness of its Creator. He says then that the second precept is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Now you love yourself suitably when you love God better than yourself. What, then, you aim at in yourself you must aim at in your neighbor, namely, that he may love God with a perfect affection. For you do not love him as yourself, unless you try to draw him to that good which you are yourself pursuing. For this is the one good which has room for all to pursue it along with thee. From this precept proceed the duties of human society, in which it is hard to keep from error. But the first thing to aim at is, that we should be benevolent, that is, that we cherish no malice and no evil design against another. For man is the nearest neighbor of man.

50. Hear also what Paul says: "The love of our neighbor," he says, "worketh no ill." The testimonies here made use of are very short, but, if I mistake not, they are to the point, and sufficient for the purpose. And every one knows how many and how weighty are the words to be found everywhere in these books on the love of our neighbor. But as a man may sin against another in two ways, either by injuring him or by not helping him when it is in his power, and as it is for these things which no loving man would do that men are called wicked, all that is required is, I think, proved by these words, "The love of our neighbor worketh no ill." And if we cannot attain to good unless we first desist from working evil, our love of our neighbor is a sort of cradle of our love to God, so that, as it is said, "the love of our neighbor worketh no ill," we may rise from this to these other words, "We know that all things issue in good to them that love God."



51. But there is a sense in which these either rise together to fullness and perfection, or, while the love of God is first in beginning, the love of our neighbor is first in coming to perfection. For perhaps divine love takes hold on us more rapidly at the outset, but we reach perfection more easily in lower things. However that may be, the main point is this, that no one should think that while he despises his neighbor he will come to happiness and to the God whom he loves. And would that it were as easy to seek the good of our neighbor, or to avoid hurting him, as it is for one well trained and kind-hearted to love his neighbor! These things require more than mere good-will, and can be done only by a high degree of thoughtfulness and prudence, which belongs only to those to whom it is given by God, the source of all good. On this topic—which is one, I think, of great difficulty—I will try to say a few words such as my plan admits of, resting all my hope in Him whose gifts these are.

#### CHAPTER 27

##### ON DOING GOOD TO THE BODY OF OUR NEIGHBOR

52. Man, then, as viewed by his fellow-man, is a rational soul with a mortal and earthly body in its service. Therefore he who loves his neighbor does good partly to the man's body, and partly to his soul. What benefits the body is called medicine; what benefits the soul, discipline. Medicine here includes everything that either preserves or restores bodily health. It includes, therefore, not only what belongs to the art of medical men, properly so called, but also food and drink, clothing and shelter, and every means of covering and protection to guard our bodies against injuries and mishaps from without as well as from within. For hunger and thirst, and cold and heat, and all violence from without, produce loss of that health which is the point to be considered.

53. Hence those who seasonably and wisely supply all the things required for warding off these evils and distresses are called compassionate, although they may have been so wise that no painful feeling disturbed their mind in the exercise of compassion. No doubt the word compassionate implies suffering in the heart of the man who feels for the sorrow of another. And it is equally true that a wise man ought to be free from all

painful emotion when he assists the needy, when he gives food to the hungry and water to the thirsty, when he clothes the naked, when he takes the stranger into his house, when he sets free the oppressed, when, lastly, he extends his charity to the dead in giving them burial. Still the epithet compassionate is a proper one, although he acts with tranquillity of mind, not from the stimulus of painful feeling, but from motives of benevolence. There is no harm in the word compassionate when there is no passion in the case.

54. Fools, again, who avoid the exercise of compassion as a vice, because they are not sufficiently moved by a sense of duty without feeling also distressful emotion, are frozen into hard insensibility, which is very different from the calm of a rational serenity. God, on the other hand, is properly called compassionate; and the sense in which He is so will be understood by those whom piety and diligence have made fit to understand. There is a danger lest, in using the words of the learned, we harden the souls of the unlearned by leading them away from compassion instead of softening them with the desire of a charitable disposition. As compassion, then, requires us to ward off these distresses from others, so harmlessness forbids the infliction of them.

## CHAPTER 28

ON DOING GOOD TO THE SOUL OF OUR NEIGHBOR. TWO PARTS OF DISCIPLINE, RESTRAINT AND INSTRUCTION. THROUGH GOOD CONDUCT WE ARRIVE AT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH

55. As regards discipline, by which the health of the mind is restored, without which bodily health avails nothing for security against misery, the subject is one of great difficulty. And as in the body we said it is one thing to cure diseases and wounds, which few can do properly, and another thing to meet the cravings of hunger and thirst, and to give assistance in all the other ways in which any man may at any time help another; so in the mind there are some things in which the high and rare offices of the teacher are not much called for,—as, for instance, in advice and exhortation to give to the needy the things already mentioned as required for the body. To give such advice is to aid the mind by discipline, as giving the things themselves is aiding the body by our resources. But there are other cases where

diseases of the mind, many and various in kind, are healed in a way strange and indescribable. Unless His medicine were sent from heaven to men, so heedlessly do they go on in sin, there would be no hope of salvation; and, indeed, even bodily health, if you go to the root of the matter, can have come to men from none but God, who gives to all things their being and their well-being.

56. This discipline, then, which is the medicine of the mind, as far as we can gather from the sacred Scriptures, includes two things, restraint and instruction. Restraint implies fear, and instruction love, in the person benefited by the discipline; for in the giver of the benefit there is the love without the fear. In both of these God Himself, by whose goodness and mercy it is that we are anything, has given us in the two Testaments a rule of discipline. For though both are found in both Testaments, still fear is prominent in the Old, and love in the New; which the apostle calls bondage in the one, and liberty in the other. Of the marvellous order and divine harmony of these Testaments it would take long to speak, and many pious and learned men have discoursed on it. The theme demands many books to set it forth and explain it as far as is possible for man. He, then, who loves his neighbor endeavors all he can to procure his safety in body and in soul, making the health of the mind the standard in his treatment of the body. And as regards the mind, his endeavors are in this order, that he should first fear and then love God. This is true excellence of conduct, and thus the knowledge of the truth is acquired which we are ever in the pursuit of.

57. The Manichaeans agree with me as regards the duty of loving God and our neighbor, but they deny that this is taught in the Old Testament. How greatly they err in this is, I think, clearly shown by the passages quoted above on both these duties. But, in a single word, and one which only stark madness can oppose, do they not see the unreasonableness of denying that these very two precepts which they commend are quoted by the Lord in the Gospel from the Old Testament, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" and the other, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" Or if they dare not deny this, from the light of truth being too strong for them, let them deny that these precepts are salutary; let them deny, if they can, that they teach the best morality; let

them assert that it is not a duty to love God, or to love our neighbor; that all things do not issue in good to them that love God; that it is not true that the love of our neighbor worketh no ill (a two-fold regulation of human life which is most salutary and excellent). By such assertions they cut themselves off not only from Christians, but from mankind. But if they dare not speak thus, but must confess the divinity of the precepts, why do they not desist from assailing and maligning with horrible profanity the books from which they are quoted?

58. Will they say, as they often do, that although we find these precepts in the books, it does not follow that all is good that is found there? How to meet and refute this quibble I do not well see. Shall I discuss the words of the Old Testament one by one, to prove to stubborn and ignorant men their perfect agreement with the New Testament? But when will this be done? When shall I have time, or they patience? What, then, is to be done? Shall I desert the cause, and leave them to escape detection in an opinion which, though false and impious, is hard to disprove? I will not. God will Himself be at hand to aid me; nor will He suffer me in those straits to remain helpless or forsaken.

## CHAPTER 29

### OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

59. Attend, then, ye Manichaeans, if perchance there are some of you of whom your superstition has hold so as to allow you yet to escape. Attend, I say, without obstinacy, without the desire to oppose, otherwise your decision will be fatal to yourselves. No one can doubt, and you are not so lost to the truth as not to understand that if it is good, as all allow, to love God and our neighbor, whatever hangs on these two precepts cannot rightly be pronounced bad. What it is that hangs on them it would be absurd to think of learning from me. Hear Christ Himself; hear Christ, I say; hear the Wisdom of God: "On these two commandments," He says, "hang all the law and the prophets."

60. What can the most shameless obstinacy say to this? That these are not Christ's words? But they are written in the Gospel as His words. That the

writing is false? Is not this most profane blasphemy? Is it not most presumptuous to speak thus? Is it not most foolhardy? Is it not most criminal? The worshippers of idols, who hate even the name of Christ, never dared to speak thus against these Scriptures. For the utter overthrow of all literature will follow, and there will be an end to all books handed down from the past, if what is supported by such a strong popular belief and established by the uniform testimony of so many men and so many times, is brought into such suspicion, that it is not allowed to have the credit and the authority of common history. In fine, what can you quote from any writings of which I may not speak in this way if it is quoted against my opinion and my purpose?

61. And is it not intolerable that they forbid us to believe a book widely known and placed now in the hands of all, while they insist on our believing the book which they quote? If any writing is to be suspected, what should be more so than one which has not merited notoriety, or which may be throughout a forgery, bearing a false name? If you force such a writing on me against my will, and make a display of authority to drive me into belief, shall I, when I have a writing which I see spread far and wide for a length of time, and sanctioned by the concordant testimony of churches scattered over all the world, degrade myself by doubting, and, worse degradation, by doubting at your suggestion? Even if you brought forward other readings, I should not receive them unless supported by general agreement; and this being the case, do you think that now, when you bring forward nothing to compare with the text except your own silly and inconsiderate statement, mankind are so unreasonable and so forsaken by divine Providence as to prefer to those Scriptures not others quoted by you in refutation, but merely your own words? You ought to bring forward another manuscript with the same contents, but incorrupt and more correct, with only the passage wanting which you charge with being spurious. For example, if you hold that the Epistle of Paul to the Romans is spurious, you must bring forward another incorrupt, or rather another manuscript with the same epistle of the same apostle, free from error and corruption. You say you will not, lest you be suspected of corrupting it. This is your usual reply, and a true one. Were you to do this, we should assuredly have this very suspicion; and all men of any sense would have it too. See then what you are to think of your own

authority; and consider whether it is right to believe your words against these Scriptures, when the simple fact that a manuscript is brought forward by you makes it dangerous to put faith in it.

## CHAPTER 30

### THE CHURCH APOSTROPHISED AS TEACHER OF ALL WISDOM. DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

62. But why say more on this? For who but sees that men who dare to speak thus against the Christian Scriptures, though they may not be what they are suspected of being, are at least no Christians? For to Christians this rule of life is given, that we should love the Lord Our God with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind, and our neighbor as ourselves; for on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Rightly, then, Catholic Church, most true mother of Christians, dost thou not only teach that God alone, to find whom is the happiest life, must be worshipped in perfect purity and chastity, bringing in no creature as an object of adoration whom we should be required to serve; and from that incorrupt and inviolable eternity to which alone man should be made subject, in cleaving to which alone the rational soul escapes misery, excluding everything made, everything liable to change, everything under the power of time; without confounding what eternity, and truth, and peace itself keeps separate, or separating what a common majesty unites: but thou dost also contain love and charity to our neighbor in such a way, that for all kinds of diseases with which souls are for their sins afflicted, there is found with thee a medicine of prevailing efficacy.

63. Thy training and teaching are childlike for children, forcible for youths, peaceful for the aged, taking into account the age of the mind as well as of the body. Thou subjectest women to their husbands in chaste and faithful obedience, not to gratify passion, but for the propagation of offspring, and for domestic society. Thou givest to men authority over their wives, not to mock the weaker sex, but in the laws of unfeigned love. Thou dost subordinate children to their parents in a kind of free bondage, and dost set parents over their children in a godly rule. Thou bindest brothers to brothers in a religious tie stronger and closer than that of blood. Without violation of

the connections of nature and of choice, thou bringest within the bond of mutual love every relationship of kindred, and every alliance of affinity. Thou teachest servants to cleave to their masters from delight in their task rather than from the necessity of their position. Thou renderest masters forbearing to their servants, from a regard to God their common Master, and more disposed to advise than to compel. Thou unitest citizen to citizen, nation to nation, yea, man to man, from the recollection of their first parents, not only in society but in fraternity. Thou teachest kings to seek the good of their peoples; thou counsellest peoples to be subject to their kings. Thou teachest carefully to whom honor is due, to whom regard, to whom reverence, to whom fear, to whom consolation, to whom admonition, to whom encouragement, to whom discipline, to whom rebuke, to whom punishment; showing both how all are not due to all, and how to all love is due, and how injury is due to none.

64. Then, after this human love has nourished and invigorated the mind cleaving to thy breast, and fitted it for following God, when the divine majesty has begun to disclose itself as far as suffices for man while a dweller on the earth, such fervent charity is produced, and such a flame of divine love is kindled, that by the burning out of all vices, and by the purification and sanctification of the man, it becomes plain how divine are these words, “I am a consuming fire,” and, “I have come to send fire on the earth.” These two utterances of one God stamped on both Testaments, exhibit with harmonious testimony, the sanctification of the soul, pointing forward to the accomplishment of that which is also quoted in the New Testament from the Old: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? Where, O death, is thy contest?” Could these heretics understand this one saying, no longer proud but quite reconciled, they would worship God nowhere but with thee and in thy bosom. In thee, as is fit, divine precepts are kept by widely-scattered multitudes. In thee, as is fit, it is well understood how much more heinous sin is when the law is known than when it is unknown. For “the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law,” which adds to the force with which the consciousness of disregard of the precept strikes and slays. In thee it is seen, as is fit, how vain is effort under the law, when lust lays waste the mind, and is held in check by fear of punishment, instead of being overborne by the love of

virtue. Thine, as is fit, are the many hospitable, the many friendly, the many compassionate, the many learned, the many chaste, the many saints, the many so ardent in their love to God, that in perfect continence and amazing indifference to this world they find happiness even in solitude.

## CHAPTER 31

### THE LIFE OF THE ANACHORETES AND COENOBITES SET AGAINST THE CONTINENCE OF THE MANICHAEANS

65. What must we think is seen by those who can live without seeing their fellow-creatures, though not without loving them? It must be something transcending human things in contemplating which man can live without seeing his fellow-man. Hear now, ye Manichaeans, the customs and notable continence of perfect Christians, who have thought it right not only to praise but also to practise the height of chastity, that you may be restrained, if there is any shame in you, from vaunting your abstinence before uninstructed minds as if it were the hardest of all things. I will speak of things of which you are not ignorant, though you hide them from us. For who does not know that there is a daily increasing multitude of Christian men of absolute continence spread all over the world, especially in the East and in Egypt, as you cannot help knowing?

66. I will say nothing of those to whom I just now alluded, who, in complete seclusion from the view of men, inhabit regions utterly barren, content with simple bread, which is brought to them periodically, and with water, enjoying communion with God, to whom in purity of mind they cleave, and most blessed in contemplating His beauty, which can be seen only by the understanding of saints. I will say nothing of them, because some people think them to have abandoned human things more than they ought, not considering how much those may benefit us in their minds by prayer, and in their lives by example, whose bodies we are not permitted to see. But to discuss this point would take long, and would be fruitless; for if a man does not of his own accord regard this high pitch of sanctity as admirable and honorable, how can our speaking lead him to do so? Only the Manichaeans, who make a boast of nothing, should be reminded that the abstinence and continence of the great saints of the Catholic Church has



gone so far, that some think it should be checked and recalled within the limits of humanity,—so far above men, even in the judgment of those who disapprove, have their minds soared.

67. But if this is beyond our tolerance, who can but admire and commend those who, slighting and discarding the pleasures of this world, living together in a most chaste and holy society, unite in passing their time in prayers, in readings, in discussions, without any swelling of pride, or noise of contention, or sullenness of envy; but quiet, modest, peaceful, their life is one of perfect harmony and devotion to God, an offering most acceptable to Him from whom the power to do those things is obtained? No one possesses anything of his own; no one is a burden to another. They work with their hands in such occupations as may feed their bodies without distracting their minds from God. The product of their toil they give to the decans or tithesmen,—so called from being set over the tithes,—so that no one is occupied with the care of his body, either in food or clothes, or in anything else required for daily use or for the common ailments. These decans, again, arranging everything with great care, and meeting promptly the demands made by that life on account of bodily infirmities, have one called “father,” to whom they give in their accounts. These fathers are not only more saintly in their conduct, but also distinguished for divine learning, and of high character in every way; and without pride they superintend those whom they call their children, having themselves great authority in giving orders, and meeting with willing obedience from those under their charge. At the close of the day they assemble from their separate dwellings before their meal to hear their father, assembling to the number of three thousand at least for one father; for one may have even a much larger number than this. They listen with astonishing eagerness in perfect silence, and give expression to the feelings of their minds as moved by the words of the preacher, in groans, or tears, or signs of joy without noise or shouting. Then there is refreshment for the body, as much as health and a sound condition of the body requires, every one checking unlawful appetite, so as not to go to excess even in the poor, inexpensive fare provided. So they not only abstain from flesh and wine, in order to gain the mastery over their passions, but also from those things which are only the more likely to whet the appetite of the palate and of the stomach, from what some call their

greater cleanness, which often serves as a ridiculous and disgraceful excuse for an unseemly taste for exquisite viands, as distant from animal food. Whatever they possess in addition to what is required for their support (and much is obtained, owing to their industry and frugality), they distribute to the needy with greater care than they took in procuring it for themselves. For while they make no effort to obtain abundance, they make every effort to prevent their abundance remaining with them,—so much so, that they send shiploads to places inhabited by poor people. I need say no more on a matter known to all.

68. Such, too, is the life of the women, who serve God assiduously and chastely, living apart and removed as far as propriety demands from the men, to whom they are united only in pious affection and in imitation of virtue. No young men are allowed access to them, nor even old men, however respectable and approved, except to the porch, in order to furnish necessary supplies. For the women occupy and maintain themselves by working in wool, and hand over the cloth to the brethren, from whom, in return, they get what they need for food. Such customs, such a life, such arrangements, such a system, I could not commend as it deserves, if I wished to commend it; besides, I am afraid that it would seem as if I thought it unlikely to gain acceptance from the mere description of it, if I considered myself obliged to add an ornamental eulogium to the simple narrative. Ye Manichaeans, find fault here if you can. Do not bring into prominence our tares before men too blind to discriminate.

## CHAPTER 32

### PRAISE OF THE CLERGY

69. There is not, however, such narrowness in the moral excellence of the Catholic Church as that I should limit my praise of it to the life of those here mentioned. For how many bishops have I known most excellent and holy men, how many presbyters, how many deacons, and ministers of all kinds of the divine sacraments, whose virtue seems to me more admirable and more worthy of commendation on account of the greater difficulty of preserving it amidst the manifold varieties of men, and in this life of turmoil! For they preside over men needing cure as much as over those

already cured. The vices of the crowd must be borne with in order that they may be cured, and the plague must be endured before it is subdued. To keep here the best way of life and a mind calm and peaceful is very hard. Here, in a word, we are among people who are learning to live. There they live.

## CHAPTER 33

### ANOTHER KIND OF MEN LIVING TOGETHER IN CITIES. FASTS OF THREE DAYS

70. Still I would not on this account cast a slight upon a praiseworthy class of Christians,—those, namely, who live together in cities, quite apart from common life. I saw at Milan a lodging-house of saints, in number not a few, presided over by one presbyter, a man of great excellence and learning. At Rome I knew several places where there was in each one eminent for weight of character, and prudence, and divine knowledge, presiding over all the rest who lived with him, in Christian charity, and sanctity, and liberty. These, too, are not burdensome to any one; but, in the Eastern fashion, and on the authority of the Apostle Paul, they maintain themselves with their own hands. I was told that many practised fasts of quite amazing severity, not merely taking only one meal daily towards night, which is everywhere quite common, but very often continuing for three days or more in succession without food or drink. And this among not men only, but women, who also live together in great numbers as widows or virgins, gaining a livelihood by spinning and weaving, and presided over in each case by a woman of the greatest judgment and experience, skilled and accomplished not only in directing and forming moral conduct, but also in instructing the understanding.

71. With all this, no one is pressed to endure hardships for which he is unfit; nothing is imposed on any one against his will; nor is he condemned by the rest because he confesses himself too feeble to imitate them: for they bear in mind how strongly Scripture enjoins charity on all: they bear in mind “To the pure all things are pure,” and “Not that which entereth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out of it.” Accordingly, all their endeavors are concerned not about the rejection of kinds of food as polluted, but about the subjugation of inordinate desire and the maintenance of brotherly love. They remember, “Meats for the belly, and the belly for

meats; but God shall destroy both it and them;” and again, “Neither if we eat shall we abound, nor if we refrain from eating shall we be in want;” and, above all, this: “It is good, my brethren, not to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother is offended;” for this passage shows that love is the end to be aimed at in all these things. “For one man,” he says, “believes that he can eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. He that eateth, let him not despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath approved him. Who art thou that thou shouldest judge another man’s servant? To his own master he stands or fails; but he shall stand: for God is able to make him to stand.” And a little after: “He that eateth, to the Lord he eateth, and giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.” And also in what follows: “So every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not, then, any more judge one another: but judge this rather, that ye place no stumbling-block, or cause of offence, in the way of a brother. I know, and am confident in the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing common in itself: but to him that thinketh anything to be common, to him it is common.” Could he have shown better that it is not in the things we eat, but in the mind, that there is a power able to pollute it, and therefore that even those who are fit to think lightly of these things, and know perfectly that they are not polluted if they take any food in mental superiority, without being gluttons, should still have regard to charity? See what he adds: “For if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably.”

72. Read the rest: it is too long to quote all. You will find that those able to think lightly of such things,—that is, those of greater strength and stability,—are told that they must nevertheless abstain, lest those should be offended who from their weakness are still in need of such abstinence. The people I was describing know and observe these things; for they are Christians, not heretics. They understand Scripture according to the apostolic teaching, not according to the presumptuous and fictitious name of apostle. Him that eats not no one despises; him that eats no one judges; he who is weak eats herbs. Many who are strong, however, do this for the sake of the weak; with many the reason for so doing is not this, but that they may have a cheaper diet, and may lead a life of the greatest tranquillity, with the least expensive

provision for the support of the body. “For all things are lawful for me,” he says; “but I will not be brought under the power of any.” Thus many do not eat flesh, and yet do not superstitiously regard it as unclean. And so the same people who abstain when in health take it when unwell without any fear, if it is required as a cure. Many drink no wine; but they do not think that wine defiles them; for they cause it to be given with the greatest propriety and moderation to people of languid temperament, and, in short, to all who cannot have bodily health without it. When some foolishly refuse it, they counsel them as brothers not to let a silly superstition make them weaker instead of making them holier. They read to them the apostle’s precept to his disciple to “take a little wine for his many infirmities.” Then they diligently exercise piety; bodily exercise, they know, profiteth for a short time, as the same apostle says.

73. Those, then who are able, and they are without number, abstain both from flesh and from wine for two reasons: either for the weakness of their brethren, or for their own liberty. Charity is principally attended to. There is charity in their choice of diet, charity in their speech, charity in their dress, charity in their looks. Charity is the point where they meet, and the plan by which they act. To transgress against charity is thought criminal, like transgressing against God. Whatever opposes this is attacked and expelled; whatever injures it is not allowed to continue for a single day. They know that it has been so enjoined by Christ and the apostles; that without it all things are empty, with it all are fulfilled.

#### CHAPTER 34

THE CHURCH IS NOT TO BE BLAMED FOR THE CONDUCT OF BAD CHRISTIANS,  
WORSHIPPERS OF TOMBS AND PICTURES

74. Make objections against these, ye Manichaeans, if you can. Look at these people, and speak of them reproachfully, if you dare, without falsehood. Compare their fasts with your fasts, their chastity with yours; compare them to yourselves in dress, food, self-restraint, and, lastly, in charity. Compare, which is most to the point, their precepts with yours. Then you will see the difference between show and sincerity, between the right way and the wrong, between faith and imposture, between strength

and inflatedness, between happiness and wretchedness, between unity and disunion; in short, between the sirens of superstition and the harbor of religion.

75. Do not summon against me professors of the Christian name, who neither know nor give evidence of the power of their profession. Do not hunt up the numbers of ignorant people, who even in the true religion are superstitious, or are so given up to evil passions as to forget what they have promised to God. I know that there are many worshippers of tombs and pictures. I know that there are many who drink to great excess over the dead, and who, in the feasts which they make for corpses, bury themselves over the buried, and give to their gluttony and drunkenness the name of religion. I know that there are many who in words have renounced this world, and yet desire to be burdened with all the weight of worldly things, and rejoice in such burdens. Nor is it surprising that among so many multitudes you should find some by condemning whose life you may deceive the unwary and seduce them from Catholic safety; for in your small numbers you are at a loss when called on to show even one out of those whom you call the elect who keeps the precepts, which in your indefensible superstition you profess. How silly those are, how impious, how mischievous, and to what extent they are neglected by most, nearly all of you, I have shown in another volume.

76. My advice to you now is this: that you should at least desist from slandering the Catholic Church, by declaiming against the conduct of men whom the Church herself condemns, seeking daily to correct them as wicked children. Then, if any of them by good will and by the help of God are corrected, they regain by repentance what they had lost by sin. Those, again, who with wicked will persist in their old vices, or even add to them others still worse, are indeed allowed to remain in the field of the Lord, and to grow along with the good seed; but the time for separating the tares will come. Or if, from their having at least the Christian name, they are to be placed among the chaff rather than among thistles, there will also come One to purge the floor and to separate the chaff from the wheat, and to assign to each part (according to its desert) the due reward.

MARRIAGE AND PROPERTY ALLOWED TO THE BAPTIZED BY THE APOSTLES

77. Meanwhile, why do you rage? why does party spirit blind your eyes? Why do you entangle yourselves in a long defence of such great error? Seek for fruit in the field, seek for wheat in the floor: they will be found easily, and will present themselves to the inquirer. Why do you look so exclusively at the dross? Why do you use the roughness of the hedge to scare away the inexperienced from the fatness of the garden? There is a proper entrance, though known to but a few; and by it men come in, though you disbelieve it, or do not wish to find it. In the Catholic Church there are believers without number who do not use the world, and there are those who “use it,” in the words of the apostle, “as not using it,” as was proved in those times when Christians were forced to worship idols. For then, how many wealthy men, how many peasant householders, how many merchants, how many military men, how many leading men in their own cities, and how many senators, people of both sexes, giving up all these empty and transitory things, though while they used them they were not bound down by them, endured death for the salutary faith and religion, and proved to unbelievers that instead of being possessed by all these things they really possessed them?

78. Why do you reproach us by saying that men renewed in baptism ought no longer to beget children, or to possess fields, and houses, and money? Paul allows it. For, as cannot be denied, he wrote to believers, after recounting many kinds of evil-doers who shall not possess the kingdom of God: “And such were you,” he says: “but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” By the washed and sanctified, no one, assuredly, will venture to think any are meant but believers, and those who have renounced this world. But, after showing to whom he writes, let us see whether he allows these things to them. He goes on: “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Meat for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. But God raised up the Lord, and

will raise us up also by His own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is made one body? for the twain, saith He, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Whatever sin a man doeth is without the body: but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. Know ye not that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a great price: glorify God, and carry Him in your body.” “But of the things concerning which ye wrote to me: it is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may have leisure for prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. For I would that all men were even as I myself: but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.”

79. Has the apostle, think you, both shown sufficiently to the strong what is highest, and permitted to the weaker what is next best? Not to touch a woman he shows is highest when he says, “I would that all men were even as I myself.” But next to this highest is conjugal chastity, that man may not be the prey of fornication. Did he say that these people were not yet believers because they were married? Indeed, by this conjugal chastity he says that those who are united are sanctified by one another, if one of them is an unbeliever, and that their children also are sanctified. “The unbelieving husband,” he says, “is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving woman by the believing husband: otherwise your children would be unclean; but now are they holy.” Why do you persist in opposition to such plain truth? Why do you try to darken the light of Scripture by vain shadows?



80. Do not say that catechumens are allowed to have wives, but not believers; that catechumens may have money, but not believers. For there are many who use as not using. And in that sacred washing the renewal of the new man is begun so as gradually to reach perfection, in some more quickly, in others more slowly. The progress, however, to a new life is made in the case of many, if we view the matter without hostility, but attentively. As the apostle says of himself, "Though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day." The apostle says that the inward man is renewed day by day that it may reach perfection; and you wish it to begin with perfection! And it were well if you did wish it. In reality, you aim not at raising the weak, but at misleading the unwary. You ought not to have spoken so arrogantly, even if it were known that you are perfect in your childish precepts. But when your conscience knows that those whom you bring into your sect, when they come to a more intimate acquaintance with you, will find many things in you which nobody hearing you accuse others would suspect, is it not great impertinence to demand perfection in the weaker Catholics, to turn away the inexperienced from the Catholic Church, while you show nothing of the kind in yourself to those thus turned away? But not to seem to inveigh against you without reason, I will now close this volume, and will proceed at last to set forth the precepts of your life and your notable customs.

# ON THE MORALS OF THE MANICHAEANS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

(DE MORIBUS MANICHAEORUM)

A.D. 388.

ST. AUGUSTIN

TRANSLATED BY THE  
REV. RICHARD STOTHERT, M.A.,  
BOMBAY

# CONTENTS

## ON THE MORALS OF THE MANICHAEANS

### On the Morals of the Manichaeans

#### Chapter 1

The Supreme Good is that Which is Possessed of Supreme Existence

#### Chapter 2

What Evil is. That Evil is that Which is Against Nature. In Allowing This, the Manichaeans Refute Themselves

#### Chapter 3

If Evil is Defined as that Which is Hurtful, This Implies Another Refutation of the Manichaeans

#### Chapter 4

The Difference Between What is Good in Itself and What is Good by Participation

#### Chapter 5

If Evil is Defined to Be Corruption, This Completely Refutes the Manichaean Heresy

#### Chapter 6

What Corruption Affects and What It is

#### Chapter 7

The Goodness of God Prevents Corruption from Bringing Anything to Non-Existence. The Difference Between Creating and Forming

#### Chapter 8

Evil is Not a Substance, But a Disagreement Hostile to Substance

#### Chapter 9

The Manichaean Fictions About Things Good and Evil are Not Consistent with Themselves

#### Chapter 10

Three Moral Symbols Devised by the Manichaeans for No Good

#### Chapter 11

The Value of the Symbol of the Mouth Among the Manichaeans, Who are Found Guilty of Blaspheming God

#### Chapter 12

Manichaean Subterfuge

Chapter 13

Actions to Be Judged of from Their Motive, Not from Externals. Manichaeian Abstinence to Be Tried by This Principle

Chapter 14

Three Good Reasons for Abstaining from Certain Kinds of Food

Chapter 15

Why the Manichaeians Prohibit the Use of Flesh

Chapter 16

Disclosure of the Monstrous Tenets of the Manichaeians

Chapter 17

Description of the Symbol of the Hands Among the Manichaeians

Chapter 18

Of the Symbol of the Breast, and of the Shameful Mysteries of the Manichaeians

Chapter 19

Crimes of the Manichaeians

Chapter 20

Disgraceful Conduct Discovered at Rome

# On the Morals of the Manichaeans

Containing a particular refutation of the doctrine of these heretics regarding the origin and nature of evil; an exposure of their pretended symbolical customs of the mouth, of the hands, and of the breast; and a condemnation of their superstitious abstinence and unholy mysteries. Lastly, some crimes brought to light among the Manichaeans are mentioned.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE SUPREME GOOD IS THAT WHICH IS POSSESSED OF SUPREME EXISTENCE

1. Every one, I suppose, will allow that the question of things good and evil belongs to moral science, in which such terms are in common use. It is therefore to be wished that men would bring to these inquiries such a clear intellectual perfection as might enable them to see the chief good, than which nothing is better or higher, next in order to which comes a rational soul in a state of purity and perfection. If this were clearly understood, it would also become evident that the chief good is that which is properly described as having supreme and original existence. For that exists in the highest sense of the word which continues always the same, which is throughout like itself, which cannot in any part be corrupted or changed, which is not subject to time, which admits of no variation in its present as compared with its former condition. This is existence in its true sense. For in this signification of the word existence there is implied a nature which is self-contained, and which continues immutably. Such things can be said only of God, to whom there is nothing contrary in the strict sense of the word. For the contrary of existence is non-existence. There is therefore no nature contrary to God. But since the minds with which we approach the study of these subjects have their vision damaged and dulled by silly notions, and by perversity of will, let us try as we can to gain some little

knowledge of this great matter by degrees and with caution, making our inquiries not like men able to see, but like men groping the dark.

## CHAPTER 2

WHAT EVIL IS. THAT EVIL IS THAT WHICH IS AGAINST NATURE. IN ALLOWING THIS, THE MANICHAEANS REFUTE THEMSELVES

2. You Manichaeans often, if not in every case, ask those whom you try to bring over to your heresy, Whence is evil? Suppose I had now met you for the first time, I would ask you, if you please, to follow my example in putting aside for a little the explanation you suppose yourselves to have got of these subjects, and to commence this great inquiry with me as if for the first time. You ask me, Whence is evil? I ask you in return, What is evil? Which is the more reasonable question? Are those right who ask whence a thing is, when they do not know what it is; or he who thinks it necessary to inquire first what it is, in order to avoid the gross absurdity of searching for the origin of a thing unknown? Your answer is quite correct, when you say that evil is that which is contrary to nature; for no one is so mentally blind as not to see that, in every kind, evil is that which is contrary to the nature of the kind. But the establishment of this doctrine is the overthrow of your heresy. For evil is no nature, if it is contrary to nature. Now, according to you, evil is a certain nature and substance. Moreover, whatever is contrary to nature must oppose nature and seek its destruction. For nature means nothing else than that which anything is conceived of as being in its own kind. Hence is the new word which we now use derived from the word for being,—essence namely, or, as we usually say, substance,—while before these words were in use, the word nature was used instead. Here, then, if you will consider the matter without stubbornness, we see that evil is that which falls away from essence and tends to non-existence.

3. Accordingly, when the Catholic Church declares that God is the author of all natures and substances, those who understand this understand at the same time that God is not the author of evil. For how can He who is the cause of the being of all things be at the same time the cause of their not being,—that is, of their falling off from essence and tending to non-existence? For this is what reason plainly declares to be the definition of

evil. Now, how can that race of evil of yours, which you make the supreme evil, be against nature, that is, against substance, when it, according to you, is itself a nature and substance? For if it acts against itself, it destroys its own existence; and when that is completely done, it will come at last to be the supreme evil. But this cannot be done, because you will have it not only to be, but to be everlasting. That cannot then be the chief evil which is spoken of as a substance.

4. But what am I to do? I know that many of you can understand nothing of all this. I know, too, that there are some who have a good understanding and can see these things, and yet are so stubborn in their choice of evil,—a choice that will ruin their understanding as well,—that they try rather to find what reply they can make in order to impose upon inactive and feeble minds, instead of giving their assent to the truth. Still I shall not regret having written either what one of you may come some day to consider impartially, and be led to abandon your error, or what men of understanding and in allegiance to God, and who are still untainted with your errors, may read and so be kept from being led astray by your addresses.

### CHAPTER 3

#### IF EVIL IS DEFINED AS THAT WHICH IS HURTFUL, THIS IMPLIES ANOTHER REFUTATION OF THE MANICHAEANS

5. Let us then inquire more carefully, and, if possible, more plainly. I ask you again, What is evil? If you say it is that which is hurtful, here, too, you will not answer amiss. But consider, I pray you; be on your guard, I beg of you; be so good as to lay aside party spirit, and make the inquiry for the sake of finding the truth, not of getting the better of it. Whatever is hurtful takes away some good from that to which it is hurtful; for without the loss of good there can be no hurt. What, I appeal to you, can be plainer than this? what more intelligible? What else is required for complete demonstration to one of average understanding, if he is not perverse? But, if this is granted, the consequence seems plain. In that race which you take for the chief evil, nothing can be liable to be hurt, since there is no good in it. But if, as you assert, there are two natures,—the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness; since you make the kingdom of light to be God,

attributing to it an uncompounded nature, so that it has no part inferior to another, you must grant, however decidedly in opposition to yourselves, you must grant, nevertheless, that this nature, which you not only do not deny to be the chief good, but spend all your strength in trying to show that it is so, is immutable, incorruptible, impenetrable, inviolable, for otherwise it would not be the chief good; for the chief good is that than which there is nothing better, and for such a nature to be hurt is impossible. Again, if, as has been shown, to hurt is to deprive of good, there can be no hurt to the kingdom of darkness, for there is no good in it. And as the kingdom of light cannot be hurt, as it is inviolable, what can the evil you speak of be hurtful to?

#### CHAPTER 4

##### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT IS GOOD IN ITSELF AND WHAT IS GOOD BY PARTICIPATION

6. Now, compare with this perplexity, from which you cannot escape, the consistency of the statements in the teaching of the Catholic Church, according to which there is one good which is good supremely and in itself, and not by the participation of any good, but by its own nature and essence; and another good which is good by participation, and by having something bestowed. Thus it has its being as good from the supreme good, which, however, is still self-contained, and loses nothing. This second kind of good is called a creature, which is liable to hurt through falling away. But of this falling away God is not the author, for He is author of existence and of being. Here we see the proper use of the word evil; for it is correctly applied not to essence, but to negation or loss. We see, too, what nature it is which is liable to hurt. This nature is not the chief evil, for when it is hurt it loses good; nor is it the chief good, for its falling away from good is because it is good not intrinsically, but by possessing the good. And a thing cannot be good by nature when it is spoken of as being made, which shows that the goodness was bestowed. Thus, on the one hand, God is the good, and all things which He has made are good, though not so good as He who made them. For what madman would venture to require that the works should equal the workman, the creatures the Creator? What more do you want? Could you wish for anything plainer than this?



## CHAPTER 5

### IF EVIL IS DEFINED TO BE CORRUPTION, THIS COMPLETELY REFUTES THE MANICHAEAN HERESY

7. I ask a third time, What is evil? Perhaps you will reply, Corruption. Undeniably this is a general definition of evil; for corruption implies opposition to nature, and also hurt. But corruption exists not by itself, but in some substance which it corrupts; for corruption itself is not a substance. So the thing which it corrupts is not corruption, is not evil; for what is corrupted suffers the loss of integrity and purity. So that which has no purity to lose cannot be corrupted; and what has, is necessarily good by the participation of purity. Again, what is corrupted is perverted; and what is perverted suffers the loss of order, and order is good. To be corrupted, then, does not imply the absence of good; for in corruption it can be deprived of good, which could not be if there was the absence of good. Therefore that race of darkness, if it was destitute of all good, as you say it was, could not be corrupted, for it had nothing which corruption could take from it; and if corruption takes nothing away, it does not corrupt. Say now, if you dare, that God and the kingdom of God can be corrupted, when you cannot show how the kingdom of the devil, such as you make it, can be corrupted.

## CHAPTER 6

### WHAT CORRUPTION AFFECTS AND WHAT IT IS

8. What further does the Catholic light say? What do you suppose, but what is the actual truth, that it is the created substance which can be corrupted, for the uncreated, which is the chief good, is incorruptible; and corruption, which is the chief evil, cannot be corrupted; besides, that it is not a substance? But if you ask what corruption is, consider to what it seeks to bring the things which it corrupts; for it affects those things according to its own nature. Now all things by corruption fall away from what they were, and are brought to non-continuance, to non-existence; for existence implies continuance. Thus the supreme and chief existence is so called because it continues in itself, or is self-contained. In the case of a thing changing for the better, the change is not from continuance, but from perversion to the worse, that is, from falling away from essence; the author of which falling

away is not He who is the author of the essence. So in some things there is change for the better, and so a tendency towards existence. And this change is not called a perversion, but reversion or conversion; for perversion is opposed to orderly arrangement. Now things which tend towards existence tend towards order, and, attaining order they attain existence, as far as that is possible to a creature. For order reduces to a certain uniformity that which it arranges; and existence is nothing else than being one. Thus, so far as anything acquires unity, so far it exists. For uniformity and harmony are the effects of unity, and by these compound things exist as far as they have existence. For simple things exist by themselves, for they are one. But things not simple imitate unity by the agreement of their parts; and so far as they attain this, so far they exist. This arrangement is the cause of existence, disorder of non-existence; and perversion or corruption are the other names for disorder. So whatever is corrupted tends to non-existence. You may now be left to reflect upon the effect of corruption, that you may discover what is the chief evil; for it is that which corruption aims at accomplishing.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE GOODNESS OF GOD PREVENTS CORRUPTION FROM BRINGING ANYTHING TO NON-EXISTENCE. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CREATING AND FORMING

9. But the goodness of God does not permit the accomplishment of this end, but so orders all things that fall away that they may exist where their existence is most suitable, till in the order of their movements they return to that from which they fell away. Thus, when rational souls fall away from God, although they possess the greatest amount of free-will, He ranks them in the lower grades of creation, where their proper place is. So they suffer misery by the divine judgment, while they are ranked suitably to their deserts. Hence we see the excellence of that saying which you are always inveighing against so strongly, “I make good things, and create evil things.” To create is to form and arrange. So in some copies it is written, “I make good things and form evil things.” To make is used of things previously not in existence; but to form is to arrange what had some kind of existence, so as to improve and enlarge it. Such are the things which God arranges when He says, “I form evil things,” meaning things which are falling off, and so tending to non-existence,—not things which have reached that to which

they tend. For it has been said, Nothing is allowed in the providence of God to go the length of non-existence.

10. These things might be discussed more fully and at greater length, but enough has been said for our purpose in dealing with you. We have only to show you the gate which you despair of finding, and make the uninstructed despair of it too. You can be made to enter only by good-will, on which the divine mercy bestows peace, as the song in the Gospel says, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good-will.” It is enough, I say, to have shown you that there is no way of solving the religious question of good and evil, unless whatever is, as far as it is, is from God; while as far as it falls away from being it is not of God, and yet is always ordered by Divine Providence in agreement with the whole system. If you do not yet see this, I know nothing else that I can do but to discuss the things already said with greater particularity. For nothing save piety and purity can lead the mind to greater things.

## CHAPTER 8

### EVIL IS NOT A SUBSTANCE, BUT A DISAGREEMENT HOSTILE TO SUBSTANCE

11. For what other answer will you give to the question, What is evil? but either that it is against nature, or that it is hurtful, or that it is corruption, or something similar? But I have shown that in these replies you make shipwreck of your cause, unless, indeed, you will answer in the childish way in which you generally speak to children, that evil is fire, poison, a wild beast, and so on. For one of the leaders of this heresy, whose instructions we attended with great familiarity and frequency, used to say with reference to a person who held that evil was not a substance, “I should like to put a scorpion in the man’s hand, and see whether he would not withdraw his hand; and in so doing he would get a proof, not in words but in the thing itself, that evil is a substance, for he would not deny that the animal is a substance.” He said this not in the presence of the person, but to us, when we repeated to him the remark which had troubled us, giving, as I said, a childish answer to children. For who with the least tincture of learning or science does not see that these things hurt by disagreement with the bodily temperament, while at other times they agree with it, so as not

only not to hurt, but to produce the best effects? For if this poison were evil in itself, the scorpion itself would suffer first and most. In fact, if the poison were quite taken from the animal, it would die. So for its body it is evil to lose what it is evil for our body to receive; and it is good for it to have what it is good for us to want. Is the same thing then both good and evil? By no means; but evil is what is against nature, for this is evil both to the animal and to us. This evil is the disagreement, which certainly is not a substance, but hostile to substance. Whence then is it? See what it leads to, and you will learn, if any inner light lives in you. It leads all that it destroys to non-existence. Now God is the author of existence; and there is no existence which, as far as it is existing, leads to non-existence: Thus we learn whence disagreement is not; as to whence it is, nothing can be said.

12. We read in history of a female criminal in Athens, who succeeded in drinking the quantity of poison allotted as a fatal draught for the condemned with little or no injury to her health, by taking it at intervals. So being condemned, she took the poison in the prescribed quantity like the rest, but rendered it powerless by accustoming herself to it, and did not die like the rest. And as this excited great wonder, she was banished. If poison is an evil, are we to think that she made it to be no evil to her? What could be more absurd than this? But because disagreement is an evil, what she did was to make the poisonous matter agree with her own body by a process of habituation. For how could she by any amount of cunning have brought it about that disagreement should not hurt her? Why so? Because what is truly and properly an evil is hurtful both always and to all. Oil is beneficial to our bodies, but very much the opposite to many six-footed animals. And is not hellebore sometimes food, sometimes medicine, and sometimes poison. Does not every one maintain that salt taken in excess is poisonous? And yet the benefits to the body from salt are innumerable and most important. Sea-water is injurious when drunk by land animals, but it is most suitable and useful to many who bathe their bodies in it and to fish it is useful and wholesome in both ways. Bread nourishes man, but kills hawks. And does not mud itself, which is offensive and noxious when swallowed or smelt, serve as cooling to the touch in hot weather, and as a cure for wounds from fire? What can be nastier than dung, or more worthless than ashes? And yet they are of such use to the fields, that the Romans thought divine honors

due to the discoverer, Stercutio, from whose name the word for dung [stercus] is derived.

13. But why enumerate details which are countless? We need not go farther than the four elements themselves, which, as every one knows, are beneficial when there is agreement, and bitterly opposed to nature when there is disagreement in the objects acted upon. We who live in air die under earth or under water, while innumerable animals creep alive in sand or loose earth, and fish die in our air. Fire consumes our bodies, but, when suitably applied, it both restores from cold, and expels diseases without number. The sun to which you bow the knee, and than which, indeed, there is no fairer object among visible things, strengthens the eyes of eagles, but hurts and dims our eyes when we gaze on it; and yet we too can accustom ourselves to look upon it without injury. Will you, then, allow the sun to be compared to the poison which the Athenian woman made harmless by habituating herself to it? Reflect for once, and consider that if a substance is an evil because it hurts some one, the light which you worship cannot be acquitted of this charge. See the preferableness of making evil in general to consist in this disagreement, from which the sun's ray produces dimness in the eyes, though nothing is pleasanter to the eyes than light.

## CHAPTER 9

### THE MANICHAEAN FICTIONS ABOUT THINGS GOOD AND EVIL ARE NOT CONSISTENT WITH THEMSELVES

14. I have said these things to make you cease, if that is possible, giving the name of evil to a region boundless in depth and length; to a mind wandering through the region; to the five caverns of the elements,—one full of darkness, another of waters, another of winds, another of fire, another of smoke; to the animals born in each of these elements,—serpents in the darkness, swimming creatures in the waters, flying creatures in the winds, quadrupeds in the fire, bipeds in the smoke. For these things, as you describe them, cannot be called evil; for all such things, as far as they exist, must have their existence from the most high God, for as far as they exist they are good. If pain and weakness is an evil, the animals you speak of were of such physical strength that their abortive offspring, after, as your

sect believes, the world was formed of them, fell from heaven to earth, according to you, and could not die. If blindness is an evil, they could see; if deafness, they could hear. If to be nearly or altogether dumb is an evil, their speech was so clear and intelligible, that, as you assert, they decided to make war against God in compliance with an address delivered in their assembly. If sterility is an evil, they were prolific in children. If exile is an evil, they were in their own country, and occupied their own territories. If servitude is an evil, some of them were rulers. If death is an evil, they were alive, and the life was such that, by your statement, even after God was victorious, it was impossible for the mind ever to die.

15. Can you tell me how it is that in the chief evil so many good things are to be found, the opposites of the evils above mentioned? and if these are not evils, can any substance be an evil, as far as it is a substance? If weakness is not an evil, can a weak body be an evil? If blindness is not an evil, can darkness be an evil? If deafness is not an evil, can a deaf man be an evil? If dumbness is not an evil, can a fish be an evil? If sterility is not an evil, how can we call a barren animal an evil? If exile is not an evil, how can we give that name to an animal in exile, or to an animal sending some one into exile? If servitude is not an evil, in what sense is a subject animal an evil, or one enforcing subjection? If death is not an evil, in what sense is a mortal animal an evil, or one causing death? Or if these are evils, must we not give the name of good things to bodily strength, sight, hearing, persuasive speech, fertility, native land, liberty, life, all which you hold to exist in that kingdom of evil, and yet venture to call it the perfection of evil?

16. Once more, if, as has never been denied, unsuitableness is an evil, what can be more suitable than those elements to their respective animals,—the darkness to serpents, the waters to swimming creatures, the winds to flying creatures, the fire to voracious animals, the smoke to soaring animals? Such is the harmony which you describe as existing in the race of strife; such the order in the seat of confusion. If what is hurtful is an evil, I do not repeat the strong objection already stated, that no hurt can be suffered where no good exists; but if that is not so clear, one thing at least is easily seen and understood as following from the acknowledged truth, that what is hurtful is an evil. The smoke in that region did not hurt bipeds: it produced them, and

nourished and sustained them without injury in their birth, their growth, and their rule. But now, when the evil has some good mixed with it, the smoke has become more hurtful, so that we, who certainly are bipeds, instead of being sustained by it, are blinded, and suffocated, and killed by it. Could the mixture of good have given such destructiveness to evil elements? Could there be such confusion in the divine government?

17. In the other cases, at least, how is it that we find that congruity which misled your author and induced him to fabricate falsehoods? Why does darkness agree with serpents, and waters with swimming creatures, and winds with flying creatures, though the fire burns up quadrupeds, and smoke chokes us? Then, again, have not serpents very sharp sight, and do they not love the sunshine, and abound most where the calmness of the air prevents the clouds from gathering much or often? How very absurd that the natives and lovers of darkness should live most comfortably and agreeably where the clearest light is enjoyed! Or if you say that it is the heat rather than the light that they enjoy, it would be more reasonable to assign to fire serpents, which are naturally of rapid motion, than the slow-going asp. Besides, all must admit that light is agreeable to the eyes of the asp, for they are compared to an eagle's eyes. But enough of the lower animals. Let us, I pray, attend to what is true of ourselves without persisting in error, and so our minds shall be disentangled from silly and mischievous falsehoods. For is it not intolerable perversity to say that in the race of darkness, where there was no mixture of light, the biped animals had so sound and strong, so incredible force of eyesight, that even in their darkness they could see the perfectly pure light (as you represent it) of the kingdom of God? for, according to you, even these beings could see this light, and could gaze at it, and study it, and delight in it, and desire it; whereas our eyes, after mixture with light, with the chief good, yea, with God, have become so tender and weak, that we can neither see anything in the dark, nor bear to look at the sun, but, after looking, lose sight of what we could see before.

18. The same remarks are applicable if we take corruption to be an evil, which no one doubts. The smoke did not corrupt that race of animals, though it corrupts animals now. Not to go over all the particulars, which would be tedious, and is not necessary, the living creatures of your

imaginary description were so much less liable to corruption than animals are now, that their abortive and premature offspring, cast headlong from heaven to earth, both lived and were productive, and could band together again, having, forsooth, their original vigor, because they were conceived before good was mixed with the evil; for, after this mixture, the animals born are, according to you, those which we now see to be very feeble and easily giving way to corruption. Can any one persist in the belief of error like this, unless he fails to see these things, or is affected by your habit and association in such an amazing way as to be proof against all the force of reasoning?

## CHAPTER 10

### THREE MORAL SYMBOLS DEvised BY THE MANICHAEANS FOR NO GOOD

19. Now that I have shown, as I think, how much darkness and error is in your opinions about good and evil things in general, let us examine now those three symbols which you extol so highly, and boast of as excellent observances. What then are those three symbols? That of the mouth, that of the hands, and that of the breast. What does this mean? That man, we are told, should be pure and innocent in mouth, in hands, and in breast. But what if he sins with eyes, ears, or nose? What if he hurts some one with his heels, or perhaps kills him? How can he be reckoned criminal when he has not sinned with mouth, hands, or breast? But, it is replied, by the mouth we are to understand all the organs of sense in the head; by the hands, all bodily actions; by the breast, all lustful tendencies. To what, then, do you assign blasphemies? To the mouth or to the hand? For blasphemy is an action of the tongue. And if all actions are to be classed under one head, why should you join together the actions of the hands and the feet, and not those of the tongue. Do you wish to separate the action of the tongue, as being for the purpose of expressing something, from actions which are not for this purpose, so that the symbol of the hands should mean abstinence from all evil actions which are not for the purpose of expressing something? But then, what if some one sins by expressing something with his hands, as is done in writing or in some significant gesture? This cannot be assigned to the tongue and the mouth, for it is done by the hands. When you have three symbols of the mouth, the hands, and the breast, it is quite inadmissible to



charge against the mouth sins found in the hands. And if you assign action in general to the hands, there is no reason for including under this the action of the feet and not that of the tongue. Do you see how the desire of novelty, with its attendant error, lands you in great difficulties? For you find it impossible to include purification of all sins in these three symbols, which you set forth as a kind of new classification.

## CHAPTER 11

THE VALUE OF THE SYMBOL OF THE MOUTH AMONG THE MANICHAEANS, WHO ARE FOUND GUILTY OF BLASPHEMING GOD

20. Classify as you please, omit what you please, we must discuss the doctrines you insist upon most. You say that the symbol of the mouth implies refraining from all blasphemy. But blasphemy is speaking evil of good things. So usually the word blasphemy is applied only to speaking evil of God; for as regards man there is uncertainty, but God is without controversy good. If, then, you are proved guilty of saying worse things of God than any one else says, what becomes of your famous symbol of the mouth? The evidence is not obscure, but clear and obvious to every understanding, and irresistible, the more so that no one can remain in ignorance of it, that God is incorruptible, immutable, liable to no injury, to no want, to no weakness, to no misery. All this the common sense of rational beings perceives, and even you assent when you hear it.

21. But when you begin to relate your fables, that God is corruptible, and mutable, and subject to injury, and exposed to want and weakness, and not secure from misery, this is what you are blind enough to teach, and what some are blind enough to believe. And this is not all; for, according to you, God is not only corruptible, but corrupted; not only changeable, but changed; not only subject to injury, but injured; not only liable to want, but in want; not only possibly, but actually weak; not only exposed to misery, but miserable. You say that the soul is God, or a part of God. I do not see how it can be part of God without being God. A part of gold is gold; of silver silver; of stone stone; and, to come to greater things, part of earth is earth, part of water is water, and of air air; and if you take part from fire, you will not deny it to be fire; and part of light can be nothing but light.

Why then should part of God not be God? Has God a jointed body, like man and the lower animals? For part of man is not man.

22. I will deal with each of these opinions separately. If you view God as resembling light, you must admit that part of God is God. Hence, when you make the soul part of God, though you allow it to be corrupted as being foolish, and changed as having once been wise, and in want as needing health, and feeble as needing medicine, and miserable as desiring happiness, all these things you profanely attribute to God. Or if you deny these things of the mind, it follows that the Spirit is not required to lead the soul into truth, since it is not in folly; nor is the soul renewed by true religion, since it does not need renewal; nor is it perfected by your symbols, since it is already perfect; nor does God give it assistance, since it does not need it; nor is Christ its physician, since it is in health; nor does it require the promise of happiness in another life. Why then is Jesus called the deliverer, according to His own words in the Gospel, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed?" And the Apostle Paul says, "Ye have been called to liberty." The soul, then, which has not attained this liberty is in bondage. Therefore, according to you, God, since part of God is God, is both corrupted by folly, and is changed by falling, and is injured by the loss of perfection, and is in need of help, and is weakened by disease, and bowed down with misery, and subject to disgraceful bondage.

23. Again, if part of God is not God, still He is not incorrupt when His part is corrupted, nor unchanged when there is change in any part, nor uninjured when He is not perfect in every part, nor free from want when He is busily endeavoring to recover part of Himself, nor quite whole when He has a weak part, nor perfectly happy when any part is suffering misery, nor entirely free when any part is under bondage. These are conclusions to which you are driven, because you say that the soul, which you see to be in such a calamitous condition, is part of God. If you can succeed in making your sect abandon these and many similar opinions, then you may speak of your mouth being free from blasphemies. Better still, leave the sect; for if you cease to believe and to repeat what Manichaeus has written, you will be no longer Manichaeans.

24. That God is the supreme good, and that than which nothing can be or can be conceived better, we must either understand or believe, if we wish to keep clear of blasphemy. There is a relation of numbers which cannot possibly be impaired or altered, nor can any nature by any amount of violence prevent the number which comes after one from being the double of one. This can in no way be changed; and yet you represent God as changeable! This relation preserves its integrity inviolable; and you will not allow God an equality even in this! Let some race of darkness take in the abstract the number three, consisting of indivisible units, and divide it into two equal parts. Your mind perceives that no hostility could effect this. And can that which is unable to injure a numerical relation injure God? If it could not, what possible necessity could there be for a part of him to be mixed with evil, and driven into such miseries?

## CHAPTER 12

### MANICHAEAN SUBTERFUGE

25. For this gives rise to the question, which used to throw us into great perplexity even when we were your zealous disciples, nor could we find any answer,—what the race of darkness would have done to God, supposing He had refused to fight with it at the cost of such calamity to part of Himself. For if God would not have suffered any loss by remaining quiet, we thought it hard that we had been sent to endure so much. Again, if He would have suffered, His nature cannot have been incorruptible, as it behoves the nature of God to be. Sometimes the answer was, that it was not for the sake of escaping evil or avoiding injury, but that God in His natural goodness wished to bestow the blessing of order on a disturbed and disordered nature. This is not what we find in the Manichaeian books: there it is constantly implied and constantly asserted that God guarded against an invasion of His enemies. But supposing this answer, which was given from want of a better, to represent the opinion of the Manichaeans, is God, in their view, vindicated from the charge of cruelty or weakness? For this goodness of His to the hostile race proved most pernicious to His own subjects. Besides, if God's nature could not be corrupted nor changed, neither could any destructive influence corrupt or change us; and the order

to be bestowed on the race of strangers might have been bestowed without robbing us of it.

26. Since those times, however, another answer has appeared which I heard recently at Carthage. For one, whom I wish much to see brought out of this error, when reduced to this same dilemma, ventured to say that the kingdom had its own limits, which might be invaded by a hostile race, though God Himself could not be injured. But this is a reply which your founder would never consent to give; for he would be likely to see that such an opinion would lead to a still speedier demolition of his heresy. And in fact any one of average intellect, who hears that in this nature part is subject to injury and part not, will at once perceive that this makes not two but three natures,—one violable, a second inviolable, and a third violating.

#### CHAPTER 13

ACTIONS TO BE JUDGED OF FROM THEIR MOTIVE, NOT FROM EXTERNALS.  
MANICHAEAN ABSTINENCE TO BE TRIED BY THIS PRINCIPLE

27. Having every day in your mouth these blasphemies which come from your heart, you ought not to continue holding up the symbol of the mouth as something wonderful, to ensnare the ignorant. But perhaps you think the symbol of the mouth excellent and admirable because you do not eat flesh or drink wine. But what is your end in this? For according as the end we have in view in our actions, on account of which we do whatever we do, is not only not culpable but also praiseworthy, so only can our actions merit any praise. If the end we have regard to in any performance is unlawful and blameworthy, the performance itself will be unhesitatingly condemned as improper.

28. We are told of Catiline that he could bear cold, thirst, and hunger. This the vile miscreant had in common with our apostles. What then distinguishes the parricide from our apostles but the precisely opposite end which he followed? He bore these things in order to gratify his fierce and ungoverned passions; they, on the other hand, in order to restrain these passions and subdue them to reason. You often say, when you are told of the great number of Catholic virgins, a she-mule is a virgin. This, indeed, is said in ignorance of the Catholic system, and is not applicable. Still, what

you mean is that this continence is worthless unless it leads, on right principles, to an end of high excellence. Catholic Christians might also compare your abstinence from wine and flesh to that of cattle and many small birds, as likewise of countless sorts of worms. But, not to be impertinent like you, I will not make this comparison prematurely, but will first examine your end in what you do. For I suppose I may safely take it as agreed on, that in such customs the end is the thing to look to. Therefore, if your end is to be frugal and to restrain the appetite which finds gratification in eating and drinking, I assent and approve. But this is not the case.

29. Suppose, what is quite possible, that there is one so frugal and sparing in his diet, that, instead of gratifying his appetite or his palate, he refrains from eating twice in one day, and at supper takes a little cabbage moistened and seasoned with lard, just enough to keep down hunger; and quenches his thirst, from regard to his health, with two or three draughts of pure wine; and this is his regular diet: whereas another of different habits never takes flesh or wine, but makes an agreeable repast at two o'clock on rare and foreign vegetables, varied with a number of courses, and well sprinkled with pepper, and sups in the same style towards night; and drinks honey-vinegar, mead, raisin-wine, and the juices of various fruits, no bad imitation of wine, and even surpassing it in sweetness; and drinks not for thirst but for pleasure; and makes this provision for himself daily, and feasts in this sumptuous style, not because he requires it, but only gratifying his taste;—which of these two do you regard as living most abstemiously in food and drink? You cannot surely be so blind as not to put the man of the little lard and wine above this glutton!

30. This is the true view; but your doctrine sounds very differently. For one of your elect distinguished by the three symbols may live like the second person in this description, and though he may be reproved by one or two of the more sedate, he cannot be condemned as abusing the symbols. But should he sup with the other person, and moisten his lips with a morsel of rancid bacon, or refresh them with a drink of spoilt wine, he is pronounced a transgressor of the symbol, and by the judgment of your founder is consigned to hell, while you, though wondering, must assent. Will you not discard these errors? Will you not listen to reason? Will you not offer some

little resistance to the force of habit? Is not such doctrine most unreasonable? Is it not insanity? Is it not the greatest absurdity that one, who stuffs and loads his stomach every day to gratify his appetite with mushrooms, rice, truffles, cake, mead, pepper, and assafoetida, and who fares thus every day, cannot be convicted of transgressing the three symbols, that is, the rule of sanctity; whereas another, who seasons his dish of the commonest herbs with some smoky morsel of meat, and takes only so much of this as is needed for the refreshment of his body, and drinks three cups of wine for the sake of keeping in health, should, for exchanging the former diet for this, be doomed to certain punishment?

#### CHAPTER 14

##### THREE GOOD REASONS FOR ABSTAINING FROM CERTAIN KINDS OF FOOD

31. But, you reply, the apostle says, “It is good, brethren, neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine.” No one denies that this is good, provided that it is for the end already mentioned, of which it is said, “Make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof;” or for the ends pointed out by the apostle, namely, either to check the appetite, which is apt to go to a more wild and uncontrollable excess in these things than in others, or lest a brother should be offended, or lest the weak should hold fellowship with an idol. For at the time when the apostle wrote, the flesh of sacrifices was often sold in the market. And because wine, too, was used in libations to the gods of the Gentiles, many weaker brethren, accustomed to purchase such things, preferred to abstain entirely from flesh and wine rather than run the risk of having fellowship, as they considered it, with idols, even ignorantly. And, for their sakes, even those who were stronger, and had faith enough to see the insignificance of these things, knowing that nothing is unclean except from an evil conscience, and holding by the saying of the Lord, “Not that which entereth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out of it,” still, lest these weaker brethren should stumble, were bound to abstain from these things. And this is not a mere theory, but is clearly taught in the epistles of the apostle himself. For you are in the habit of quoting only the words, “It is good, brethren, neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine,” without adding what follows, “nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth,

or is offended or is made weak.” These words show the intention of the apostle in giving the admonition.

32. This is evident from the preceding and succeeding context. The passage is a long one to quote, but, for the sake of those who are indolent in reading and searching the sacred Scriptures, we must give the whole of it. “Him that is weak in the faith,” says the apostle, “receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ both lived, and died and rose again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or occasion to fall, in his brother’s way. I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing common of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be common, to him it is common. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then our good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he who in this serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. For meat destroys not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for

that man who eateth with offense. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he who condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that distinguishes is damned if he eats, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself.”

33. Is it not clear that what the apostle required was, that the stronger should not eat flesh nor drink wine, because they gave offense to the weak by not going along with them, and made them think that those who in faith judged all things to be pure, did homage to idols in not abstaining from that kind of food and drink? This is also set forth in the following passage of the Epistle to the Corinthians: “As concerning, therefore, the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some, with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, shall we abound; neither, if we eat not, shall we suffer want. But take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any man see one who has knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not his conscience being weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh forever, lest I make my brother to offend.”

34. Again, in another place: “What say I then? that the idol is anything? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But the things which



the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than He? All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man what is another's. Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shows it, and for conscience sake: conscience, I say, not thine own, but another's: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? For if I be a partaker with thanksgiving, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Greeks, nor to the Church of God: even as I please all men in all things not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

35. It is clear, then, I think, for what end we should abstain from flesh and wine. The end is threefold: to check indulgence, which is mostly practised in this sort of food, and in this kind of drink goes the length of intoxication; to protect weakness, on account of the things which are sacrificed and offered in libation; and, what is most praiseworthy of all, from love, not to offend the weakness of those more feeble than ourselves, who abstain from these things. You, again, consider a morsel of meat unclean; whereas the apostle says that all things are clean, but that it is evil to him that eateth with offence. And no doubt you are defiled by such food, simply because you think it unclean. For the apostle says, "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing common of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything common, to him it is common." And every one can see that by common he means unclean and defiled. But it is folly to discuss passages of Scripture with you; for you both mislead people by promising to prove your doctrines, and those books which possess authority to demand our homage you affirm to be corrupted by spurious interpolations. Prove then to me your doctrine that flesh defiles the eater, when it is taken without offending any one, without any weak notions, and without any excess.

## WHY THE MANICHAEANS PROHIBIT THE USE OF FLESH

36. It is worth while to take note of the whole reason for their superstitious abstinence, which is given as follows:—Since, we are told, the member of God has been mixed with the substance of evil, to repress it and to keep it from excessive ferocity,—for that is what you say,—the world is made up of both natures, of good and evil, mixed together. But this part of God is daily being set free in all parts of the world, and restored to its own domain. But in its passage upwards as vapor from earth to heaven, it enters plants, because their roots are fixed in the earth, and so gives fertility and strength to all herbs and shrubs. From these animals get their food, and, where there is sexual intercourse, fetter in the flesh the member of God, and, turning it from its proper course, they come in the way and entangle it in errors and troubles. So then, if food consisting of vegetables and fruits comes to the saints, that is, to the Manichaeans by means of their chastity, and prayers, and psalms, whatever in it is excellent and divine is purified, and so is entirely perfected, in order to restoration, free from all hindrance, to its own domain. Hence you forbid people to give bread or vegetables, or even water, which would cost nobody anything, to a beggar, if he is not a Manichaean, lest he should defile the member of God by his sins, and obstruct its return.

37. Flesh, you say, is made up of pollution itself. For, according to you, some portion of that divine part escapes in the eating of vegetables and fruits: it escapes while they undergo the infliction of rubbing, grinding, or cooking, as also of biting or chewing. It escapes, too, in all motions of animals, in the carriage of burdens, in exercise, in toil, or in any sort of action. It escapes, too, in our rest, when digestion is going on in the body by means of internal heat. And as the divine nature escapes in all these ways, some very unclean dregs remain, from which, in sexual intercourse, flesh is formed. These dregs, however, fly off, in the motions above mentioned, along with what is good in the soul; for though it is mostly, it is not entirely good. So, when the soul has left the flesh, the dregs are utterly filthy, and the soul of those who eat flesh is defiled.

## DISCLOSURE OF THE MONSTROUS TENETS OF THE MANICHAEANS

38. O the obscurity of the nature of things! How hard to expose falsehood! Who that hears these things, if he is one who has not learned the causes of things, and who, not yet illuminated by any ray of truth, is deceived by material images, would not think them true, precisely because the things spoken of are invisible, and are presented to the mind under the form of visible things, and can be eloquently expressed? Men of this description exist in numbers and in droves, who are kept from being led away into these errors more by a fear grounded on religious feeling than by reason. I will therefore endeavor, as God may please to enable me, so to refute these errors, as that their falsehood and absurdity will be manifest not only in the judgment of the wise, who reject them on hearing them, but also to the intelligence of the multitude.

39. Tell me then, first, where you get the doctrine that part of God, as you call it, exists in corn, beans, cabbage, and flowers and fruits. From the beauty of the color, say they, and the sweetness of the taste; this is evident; and as these are not found in rotten substances, we learn that their good has been taken from them. Are they not ashamed to attribute the finding of God to the nose and the palate? But I pass from this. For I will speak, using words in their proper sense; and, as the saying is, this is not so easy in speaking to you. Let us see rather what sort of mind is required to understand this; how, if the presence of good in bodies is shown by their color, the dung of animals, the refuse of flesh itself, has all kinds of bright colors, sometimes white, often golden; and so on, though these are what you take in fruits and flowers as proofs of the presence and indwelling of God. Why is it that in a rose you hold the red color to be an indication of an abundance of good, while the same color in blood you condemn? Why do you regard with pleasure in a violet the same color which you turn away from in cases of cholera, or of people with jaundice, or in the excrement of infants? Why do you believe the light, shining appearance of oil to be a sign of a plentiful admixture of good, which you readily set about purifying by taking the oil into your throats and stomachs, while you are afraid to touch your lips with a drop of fat, though it has the same shining appearance as

oil? Why do you look upon a yellow melon as part of the treasures of God, and not rancid bacon fat or the yolk of an egg? Why do you think that whiteness in a lettuce proclaims God, and not in milk? So much for colors, as regards which (to mention nothing else) you cannot compare any flower-clad meadow with the wings and feathers of a single peacock, though these are of flesh and of fleshly origin.

40. Again, if this good is discovered also by smell, perfumes of excellent smell are made from the flesh of some animals. And the smell of food, when cooked along with flesh of delicate flavor, is better than if cooked without it. Once more, if you think that the things that have a better smell than others are therefore cleaner, there is a kind of mud which you ought to take to your meals instead of water from the cistern; for dry earth moistened with rain has an odor most agreeable to the sense, and this sort of mud has a better smell than rain-water taken by itself. But if we must have the authority of taste to prove the presence in any object of part of God, he must dwell in dates and honey more than in pork, but more in pork than in beans. I grant that He dwells more in a fig than in a liver; but then you must allow that He is more in liver than in beet. And, on this principle, must you not confess that some plants, which none of you can doubt to be cleaner than flesh, receive God from this very flesh, if we are to think of God as mixed with the flavor? For both cabbages taste better when cooked along with flesh; and, while we cannot relish the plants on which cattle feed, when these are turned into milk we think them improved in color, and find them very agreeable to the taste.

41. Or must we think that good is to be found in greater quantity where the three good qualities—a good color, and smell, and taste—are found together? Then you must not admire and praise flowers so much, as you cannot admit them to be tried at the tribunal of the palate. At least you must not prefer purslain to flesh, since flesh when cooked is superior in color, smell, and taste. A young pig roasted (for your ideas on this subject force us to discuss good and evil with you as if you were cooks and confectioners, instead of men of reading or literary taste) is bright in color, and agreeable in smell, and pleasant in taste. Here is a perfect evidence of the presence of the divine substance. You are invited by this threefold testimony, and called

on to purify this substance by your sanctity. Make the attack. Why do you hold back? What objection have you to make. In color alone the excrement of an infant surpasses lentils; in smell alone a roast morsel surpasses a soft green fig; in taste alone a kid when slaughtered surpasses the plant which it fed on when alive: and we have found a kind of flesh in flavor of which all three give evidence. What more do you require? What reply will you make? Why should eating meat make you unclean, if using such monstrosities in discussion does not? And, above all, the rays of the sun, which you surely think more of than all animal or vegetable food, have no smell or taste, and are remarkable among other substances only by their eminently bright color; which is a loud call to you, and an obligation, in spite of yourselves, to place nothing higher than a bright color among the evidences of an admixture of good.

42. Thus you are forced into this difficulty, that you must acknowledge the part of God as dwelling more in blood, and in the filthy but bright-colored animal refuse which is thrown out in the streets, than in the pale leaves of the olive. If you reply, as you actually do, that olive leaves when burnt give out a flame, which proves the presence of light, while flesh when burnt does not, what will you say of oil, which lights nearly all the lamps in Italy? What of cow dung (which surely is more unclean than the flesh), which peasants use when dry as fuel, so that the fire is always at hand, and the liberation of the smoke is always going on? And if brightness and lustre prove a greater presence of the divine part, why do you yourselves not purify it, why not appropriate it, why not liberate it? For it is found chiefly in flowers, not to speak of blood and countless things almost the same as blood in flesh or coming from it, and yet you cannot feed on flowers. And even if you were to eat flesh, you would certainly not take with your gruel the scales of fish, or some worms and flies, though these all shine with a light of their own in the dark.

43. What then remains, but that you should cease saying that you have in your eyes, nose, and palate sufficient means of testing the presence of the divine part in material objects? And, without these means, how can you tell not only that there is a greater part of God in plants than in flesh, but that there is any part in plants at all? Are you led to think this by their beauty—

not the beauty of agreeable color, but that of agreement of parts? An excellent reason, in my opinion. For you will never be so bold as to compare twisted pieces of wood with the bodies of animals, which are formed of members answering to one another. But if you choose the testimony of the senses, as those must do who cannot see with their mind the full force of existence, how do you prove that the substance of good escapes from bodies in course of time, and by some kind of attrition, but because God has gone out of it, according to your view, and has left one place for another? The whole is absurd. But, as far as I can judge, there are no marks or appearances to give rise to this opinion. For many things plucked from trees, or pulled out of the ground, are the better of some interval of time before we use them for food, as leeks and endive, lettuce, grapes, apples, figs, and some pears; and there are many other things which get a better color when they are not used immediately after being plucked, besides being more wholesome for the body, and having a finer flavor to the palate. But these things should not possess all these excellent and agreeable qualities, if, as you say, they become more destitute of good the longer they are kept after separation from their mother earth. Animal food itself is better and more fit for use the day after the animal is killed; but this should not be, if, as you hold, it possessed more good immediately after the slaughter than next day, when more of the divine substance had escaped.

44. Who does not know that wine becomes purer and better by age? Nor is it, as you think, more tempting to the destruction of the senses, but more useful for invigorating the body,—only let there be moderation, which ought to control everything. The senses are sooner destroyed by new wine. When the must has been only a short time in the vat, and has begun to ferment, it makes those who look down into it fall headlong, affecting their brain, so that without assistance they would perish. And as regards health, every one knows that bodies are swollen up and injuriously distended by new wine? Has it these bad properties because there is more good in it? Are they not found in wine when old because a good deal of the divine substance has gone? An absurd thing to say, especially for you, who prove the divine presence by the pleasing effect produced on your eyes, nose, and palate! And what a contradiction it is to make wine the poison of the princes of darkness, and yet to eat grapes! Has it more of the poison when

in the cup than when in the cluster? Or if the evil remains unmixed after the good is gone, and that by the process of time, how is it that the same grapes, when hung up for awhile, become milder, sweeter, and more wholesome? or how does the wine itself, as already mentioned, become purer and brighter when the light has gone, and more wholesome by the loss of the beneficial substance?

45. What are we to say of wood and leaves, which in course of time become dry, but cannot be the worse on that account in your estimation? For while they lose that which produces smoke, they retain that from which a bright flame arises; and, to judge by the clearness, which you think so much of, there is more good in the dry than in the green. Hence you must either deny that there is more of God in the pure light than in the smoky one, which will upset all your evidences; or you must allow it to be possible that, when plants are plucked up, or branches plucked off, and kept for a time, more of the nature of evil may escape from them than of the nature of good. And, on the strength of this, we shall hold that more evil may go off from plucked fruits; and so more good may remain in animal food. So much on the subject of time.

46. As for motion, and tossing, and rubbing, if these give the divine nature the opportunity of escaping from these substances, many things of the same kind are against you, which are improved by motion. In some grains the juice resembles wine, and is excellent when moved about. Indeed, as must not be overlooked, this kind of drink produces intoxication rapidly; and yet you never called the juice of grain the poison of the princes of darkness. There is a preparation of water, thickened with a little meal, which is the better of being shaken, and, strange to say, is lighter in color when the light is gone. The pastry cook stirs honey for a long time to give it this light color, and to make its sweetness milder and less unwholesome: you must explain how this can come from the loss of good. Again, if you prefer to test the presence of God by the agreeable effects on the hearing, and not sight, or smell, or taste, harps get their strings and pipes their bones from animals; and these become musical by being dried, and rubbed, and twisted. So the pleasures of music, which you hold to have come from the divine kingdom, are obtained from the refuse of dead animals, and that, too, when

they are dried by time, and lessened by rubbing, and stretched by twisting. Such rough treatment, according to you, drives the divine substance from living objects; even cooking them, you say, does this. Why then are boiled thistles not unwholesome? Is it because God, or part of God, leaves them when they are cooked?

47. Why mention all the particulars, when it is difficult to enumerate them? Nor is it necessary; for every one knows how many things are sweeter and more wholesome when cooked. This ought not to be, if, as you suppose, things lose the good by being thus moved about. I do not suppose that you will find any proof from your bodily senses that flesh is unclean, and defiles the souls of those who eat it, because fruits, when plucked and shaken about in various ways, become flesh; especially as you hold that vinegar, in its age and fermentation, is cleaner than wine, and the mead you drink is nothing else than cooked wine, which ought to be more impure than wine, if material things lose the divine members by being moved about and cooked. But if not, you have no reason to think that fruits, when plucked, kept, handled, cooked, and digested, are forsaken by the good, and therefore supply most unclean matter for the formation of bodies.

48. But if it is not from their color and appearance, and smell and taste, that you think the good to be in these things, what else can you bring forward? Do you prove it from the strength and vigor which those things seem to lose when they are separated from the earth and put to use? If this is your reason (though its erroneousness is seen at once, from the fact that the strength of some things is increased after their separation from the earth, as in the case already mentioned of wine, which becomes stronger from age),—if the strength, then, is your reason, it would follow that the part of God is to be found in no food more abundantly than in flesh. For athletes, who especially require vigor and energy, are not in the habit of feeding on cabbage and fruit without animal food.

49. Is your reason for thinking the bodies of trees better than our bodies, that flesh is nourished by trees and not trees by flesh. You forget the obvious fact that plants, when manured with dung, become richer and more fertile and crops heavier, though you think it your gravest charge against flesh that it is the abode of dung. This then gives nourishment to things you



consider clean, though it is, according to you, the most unclean part of what you consider unclean. But if you dislike flesh because it springs from sexual intercourse, you should be pleased with the flesh of worms, which are bred in such numbers, and of such a size, in fruits, in wood, and in the earth itself, without any sexual intercourse. But there is some insincerity in this. For if you were displeased with flesh because it is formed from the cohabitation of father and mother, you would not say that those princes of darkness were born from the fruits of their own trees; for no doubt you think worse of these princes than of flesh, which you refuse to eat.

50. Your idea that all the souls of animals come from the food of their parents, from which confinement you pretend to liberate the divine substance which is held bound in your viands, is quite inconsistent with your abstinence from flesh, and makes it a pressing duty for you to eat animal food. For if souls are bound in the body by those who eat animal food, why do you not secure their liberation by being beforehand in eating the food? You reply, it is not from the animal food that the good part comes which those people bring into bondage, but from the vegetables which they take with their meat. What will you say then of the souls of lions, who feed only on flesh? They drink, is the reply, and so the soul is drawn in from the water and confined in flesh. But what of birds without number? What of eagles, which eat only flesh, and need no drink? Here you are at a loss, and can find no answer. For if the soul comes from food, and there are animals which neither drink anything nor have any food but flesh, and yet bring forth young, there must be some soul in flesh; and you are bound to try your plan of purifying it by eating the flesh. Or will you say that a pig has a soul of light, because it eats vegetables, and drinks water; and that the eagle, because it eats only flesh, has a soul of darkness, though it is so fond of the sun?

51. What a confusion of ideas! What amazing fatuity! All this you would have escaped, if you had rejected idle fictions, and had followed what truth sanctions in abstinence from food, which would have taught you that sumptuous eating is to be avoided, not to escape pollution, as there is nothing of the kind, but to subdue the sensual appetite. For should any one, from inattention to the nature of things, and the properties of the soul and

body, allow that the soul is polluted by animal food, you will admit that it is much much more defiled by sensuality. Is it reasonable, then, or rather, is it not most unreasonable, to expel from the number of the elect a man who, perhaps for his health's sake, takes some animal food without sensual appetite; while, if a man eagerly devours peppered truffles, you can only reprove him for excess, but cannot condemn him as abusing your symbol? So one who has been induced, not by sensuality, but for health, to eat part of a fowl, cannot remain among your elect; though one may remain who has yielded voluntarily to an excessive appetite for comfits and cakes without animal matter. You retain the man plunged in the defilements of sensuality, and dismiss the man polluted, as you think, by the mere food; though you allow that the defilement of sensuality is far greater than that of meat. You keep hold of one who gloats with delight over highly-seasoned vegetables, unable to keep possession of himself; while you shut out one who, to satisfy hunger, takes whatever comes, if suitable for nourishment, ready either to use the food, or to let it go. Admirable customs! Excellent morals! Notable temperance!

52. Again, the notion that it is unlawful for any one but the elect to touch as food what is brought to your meals for what you call purification, leads to shameful and sometimes to criminal practices. For sometimes so much is brought that it cannot easily be eaten up by a few; and as it is considered sacrilege to give what is left to others, or, at least, to throw it away, you are obliged to eat to excess, from the desire to purify, as you call it, all that is given. Then, when you are full almost to bursting, you cruelly use force in making the boys of your sect eat the rest. So it was charged against some one at Rome that he killed some poor children, by compelling them to eat for this superstitious reason. This I should not believe, did I not know how sinful you consider it to give this food to those who are not elect, or, at any rate, to throw it away. So the only way is to eat it; and this leads every day to gluttony, and may sometimes lead to murder.

53. For the same reason you forbid giving bread to beggars. By way of showing compassion, or rather of avoiding reproach, you advise to give money. The cruelty of this is equalled by its stupidity. For suppose a place where food cannot be purchased: the beggar will die of starvation, while

you, in your wisdom and benevolence, have more mercy on a cucumber than on a human being! This is in truth (for how could it be better designated) pretended compassion, and real cruelty. Then observe the stupidity. What if the beggar buys bread for himself with the money you give him? Will the divine part, as you call it, not suffer the same in him when he buys the food as it would have suffered if he had taken it as a gift from you? So this sinful beggar plunges in corruption part of God eager to escape, and is aided in this crime by your money! But you in your great sagacity think it enough that you do not give to one about to commit murder a man to kill, though you knowingly give him money to procure somebody to be killed. Can any madness go beyond this? The result is, that either the man dies if he cannot get food for his money, or the food itself dies if he gets it. The one is true murder; the other what you call murder: though in both cases you incur the guilt of real murder. Again, there is the greatest folly and absurdity in allowing your followers to eat animal food, while you forbid them to kill animals. If this food does not defile, take it yourselves. If it defiles, what can be more unreasonable than to think it more sinful to separate the soul of a pig from its body than to defile the soul of a man with the pig's flesh.

## CHAPTER 17

### DESCRIPTION OF THE SYMBOL OF THE HANDS AMONG THE MANICHAEANS

54. We must now notice and discuss the symbol of the hands. And, in the first place, your abstaining from the slaughter of animals and from injuring plants is shown by Christ to be mere superstition; for, on the ground that there is no community of rights between us and brutes and trees, He both sent the devils into an herd of swine, and withered by His curse a tree in which He had found no fruit. The swine assuredly had not sinned, nor had the tree. We are not so insane as to think that a tree is fruitful or barren by its own choice. Nor is it any reply to say that our Lord wished in these actions to teach some other truths; for every one knows that. But assuredly the Son of God would not commit murder to illustrate truth, if you call the destruction of a tree or of an animal murder. The signs which Christ wrought in the case of men, with whom we certainly have a community of rights, were in healing, not in killing them. And it would have been the

same in the case of beasts and trees, if we had that community with them which you imagine.

55. I think it right to refer here to the authority of Scripture, because we cannot here enter on a profound discussion about the soul of animals, or the kind of life in trees. But as you preserve the right to call the Scriptures corrupted, in case you should find them too strongly opposed to you,—although you have never affirmed the passages about the tree and the herd of swine to be spurious,—still, lest some day you should wish to say this of them too, when you find how much they are against you, I will adhere to my plan, and will ask you, who are so liberal in your promises of evidence and truth, to tell me first what harm is done to a tree, I say not by plucking a leaf or an apple,—for which, however, one of you would be condemned at once as having abused the symbol, if he did it intentionally, and not accidentally,—but if you tear it up by the root. For the soul in trees, which, according to you, is a rational soul, is, in your theory, freed from bondage when the tree is cut down,—a bondage, too, where it suffered great misery and got no profit. For it is well known that you, in the words of your founder, threaten as a great, though not the greatest punishment, the change from a man to a tree; and it is not probable that the soul in a tree can grow in wisdom as it does in a man. There is the best reason for not killing a man, in case you should kill one whose wisdom or virtue might be of use to many, or one who might have attained to wisdom, whether by the advice of another without himself, or by divine illumination in his own mind. And the more wisdom the soul has when it leaves the body, the more profitable is its departure, as we know both from well-grounded reasoning and from widespread belief. Thus to cut down a tree is to set free the soul from a body in which it makes no progress in wisdom. You—the holy men, I mean—ought to be mainly occupied in cutting down trees, and in leading the souls thus emancipated to better things by prayers and psalms. Or can this be done only with the souls which you take into your belly, instead of aiding them by your understanding?

56. And you cannot escape the admission that the souls in trees make no progress in wisdom while they are there, when you are asked why no apostle was sent to teach trees as well as men, or why the apostle sent to

men did not preach the truth to trees also. Your reply must be, that the souls while in such bodies cannot understand the divine precepts. But this reply lands you in great difficulties; for you declare that these souls can hear your voices and understand what you say, and see bodies and their motions, and even discern thoughts. If this is true, why could they learn nothing from the apostle of light? Why could they not learn even much better than we, since they can see into the mind? Your master, who, as you say, has difficulty in teaching you by speech, might have taught these souls by thought; for they could see his ideas in his mind before he expressed them. But if this is untrue, consider into what errors you have fallen.

57. As for your not plucking fruits or pulling up vegetables yourselves, while you get your followers to pluck and pull and bring them to you, that you may confer benefits not only on those who bring the food but on the food which is brought, what thoughtful person can bear to hear this? For, first, it matters not whether you commit a crime yourself, or wish another to commit it for you. You deny that you wish this! How then can relief be given to the divine part contained in lettuce and leeks, unless some one pull them and bring them to the saints to be purified. And again, if you were passing through a field where the right of friendship permitted you to pluck anything you wished, what would you do if you saw a crow on the point of eating a fig? Does not, according to your ideas, the fig itself seem to address you and to beg of you piteously to pluck it yourself and give it burial in a holy belly, where it may be purified and restored, rather than that the crow should swallow it and make it part of his cursed body, and then hand it over to bondage and torture in other forms? If this is true, how cruel you are! If not, how silly! What can be more contrary to your opinions than to break the symbol? What can be more unkind to the member of God than to keep it?

58. This supposes the truth of your false and vain ideas. But you can be shown guilty of plain and positive cruelty flowing from the same error. For were any one lying on the road, his body wasted with disease, weary with journeying, and half-dead from his sufferings, and able only to utter some broken words, and if eating a pear would do him good as an astringent, and were he to beg you to help him as you passed by, and were he to implore

you to bring the fruit from a neighboring tree, with no divine or human prohibition to prevent your doing so, while the man is sure to die for the want of it, you, a Christian man and a saint, will rather pass on and abandon a man thus suffering and entreating, lest the tree should lament the loss of its fruit, and you should be doomed to the punishment threatened by Manichaeus for breaking the symbol. Strange customs, and strange harmlessness!

59. Now, as regards killing animals, and the reasons for your opinion, much that has been said will apply also to this. For what harm will be done to the soul of a wolf by killing the wolf, since the wolf, as long as it lives, will be a wolf, and will not listen to any preacher, or give up, in the least, shedding the blood of sheep; and, by killing it, the rational soul, as you think, will be set free from its confinement in the body? But you make this slaughter unlawful even for your followers; for you think it worse than that of trees. And in this there is not much fault to be found with your senses,—that is, your bodily senses. For we see and hear by their cries that animals die with pain, although man disregards this in a beast, with which, as not having a rational soul, we have no community of rights. But as to your senses in the observation of trees, you must be entirely blind. For not to mention that there are no movements in the wood expressive of pain, what is clearer than that a tree is never better than when it is green and flourishing, gay with flowers, and rich in fruit? And this comes generally and chiefly from pruning. But if it felt the iron, as you suppose, it ought to die of wounds so many, so severe, instead of sprouting at the places, and reviving with such manifest delight.

60. But why do you think it a greater crime to destroy animals than plants, although you hold that plants have a purer soul than animals? There is a compensation, we are told, when part of what is taken from the fields is given to the elect and the saints to be purified. This has already been refuted; and it has, I think, been proved sufficiently that there is no reason for saying that more of the good part is found in vegetables than in flesh. But should any one support himself by selling butcher-meat, and spend the whole profit of his business in purchasing food for your elect, and bring larger supplies for those saints than any peasant or farmer, will he not plead

this compensation as a warrant for his killing animals? But there is, we are told, some other mysterious reason; for a cunning man can always find some resource in the secrets of nature when addressing unlearned people. The story, then, is that the heavenly princes who were taken from the race of darkness and bound, and have a place assigned them in this region by the Creator of the world, have animals on the earth specially belonging to them, each having those coming from his own stock and class; and they hold the slaughterers of those animals guilty, and do not allow them to leave the earth, but harass them as much as they can with pains and torments. What simple man will not be frightened by this, and, seeing nothing in the darkness shrouding these things, will not think that the fact is as described? But I will hold to my purpose, with God's help, to rebut mysterious falsehood by the plainest truth.

61. Tell me, then, if animals on land and in water come in regular succession by ordinary generation from this race of princes, since the origin of animal life is traced to the abortive births in that race;—tell me, I say, whether bees and frogs, and many other creatures not sprung from sexual intercourse, may be killed with impunity. We are told they cannot. So it is not on account of their relation to certain princes that you forbid your followers to kill animals. Or if you make a general relationship to all bodies, the princes would be equally concerned about trees, which you do not require your followers to spare. You are brought back to the weak reply, that the injuries done in the case of plants are atoned for by the fruits which your followers bring to your church. For this implies that those who slaughter animals, and sell their flesh in the market, if they are your followers, and if they bring to you vegetables bought with their gains, may think nothing of the daily slaughter, and are cleared of any sin that may be in it by your repasts.

62. But if you say that, in order to expiate the slaughter, the thing must be given as food, as in the case of fruits and vegetables,—which cannot be done, because the elect do not eat flesh, and so your followers must not slaughter animals,—what reply will you give in the case of thorns and weeds, which farmers destroy in clearing their fields, while they cannot bring any food to you from them? How can there be pardon for such

destruction, which gives no nourishment to the saints? Perhaps you also put away any sin committed, for the benefit of the fruits and vegetables, by eating some of these. What then if the fields are plundered by locusts, mice, or rats, as we see often happen? Can your rustic follower kill these with impunity, because he sins for the good of his crops? Here you are at a loss; for you either allow your followers to kill animals, which your founder prohibited, or you forbid them to be cultivators, which he made lawful. Indeed, you sometimes go so far as to say that an usurer is more harmless than a cultivator,—you feel so much more for melons than for men. Rather than hurt the melons, you would have a man ruined as a debtor. Is this desirable and praiseworthy justice, or not rather atrocious and damnable error? Is this commendable compassion, or not rather detestable barbarity?

63. What, again, of your not abstaining yourselves from the slaughter of lice, bugs, and fleas? You think it a sufficient excuse for this to say that these are the dirt of our bodies. But this is clearly untrue of fleas and bugs; for every one knows that these animals do not come from our bodies. Besides, if you abhor sexual intercourse as much as you pretend to do, you should think those animals all the cleaner which come from our bodies without any other generation; for although they produce offspring of their own, they are not produced in ordinary generation from us. Again, if we must consider as most filthy the production of living bodies, still worse must be the production of dead bodies. There must be less harm, therefore, in killing a rat, a snake, or a scorpion, which you constantly say come from our dead bodies. But to pass over what is less plain and certain, it is a common opinion regarding bees that they come from the carcasses of oxen; so there is no harm in killing them. Or if this too is doubted, every one allows that beetles, at least, are bred in the ball of mud which they make and bury. You ought therefore to consider these animals, and others that it would be tedious to specify, more unclean than your lice; and yet you think it sinful to kill them, though it would be foolish not to kill the lice. Perhaps you hold the lice cheap because they are small. But if an animal is to be valued by its size, you must prefer a camel to a man.

64. Here we may use the gradation which often perplexed us when we were your followers. For if a flea may be killed on account of its small size, so



may the fly which is bred in beans. And if this, so also may one of a little larger size, for its size at birth is even less. Then again, a bee may be killed, for its young is no larger than a fly. So on to the young of a locust, and to a locust; and then to the young of a mouse, and to a mouse. And, to cut short, it is clear we may come at last to an elephant; so that one who thinks it no sin to kill a flea, because of its small size, must allow that it would be no sin in him to kill this huge creature. But I think enough has been said of these absurdities.

## CHAPTER 18

### OF THE SYMBOL OF THE BREAST, AND OF THE SHAMEFUL MYSTERIES OF THE MANICHAEANS

65. Lastly, there is the symbol of the breast, in which your very questionable chastity consists. For though you do not forbid sexual intercourse, you, as the apostle long ago said, forbid marriage in the proper sense, although this is the only good excuse for such intercourse. No doubt you will exclaim against this, and will make it a reproach against us that you highly esteem and approve perfect chastity, but do not forbid marriage, because your followers—that is, those in the second grade among you—are allowed to have wives. After you have said this with great noise and heat, I will quietly ask, Is it not you who hold that begetting children, by which souls are confined in flesh, is a greater sin than cohabitation? Is it not you who used to counsel us to observe as much as possible the time when a woman, after her purification, is most likely to conceive, and to abstain from cohabitation at that time, lest the soul should be entangled in flesh? This proves that you approve of having a wife, not for the procreation of children, but for the gratification of passion. In marriage, as the marriage law declares, the man and woman come together for the procreation of children. Therefore whoever makes the procreation of children a greater sin than copulation, forbids marriage, and makes the woman not a wife, but a mistress, who for some gifts presented to her is joined to the man to gratify his passion. Where there is a wife there must be marriage. But there is no marriage where motherhood is not in view; therefore neither is there a wife. In this way you forbid marriage. Nor can you defend yourselves

successfully from this charge, long ago brought against you prophetically by the Holy Spirit.

66. Moreover, when you are so eager in your desire to prevent the soul from being confined in flesh by conjugal intercourse, and so eager in asserting that the soul is set free from seed by the food of the saints, do you not sanction, unhappy beings, the suspicion entertained about you? For why should it be true regarding corn and beans and lentils and other seeds, that when you eat them you wish to set free the soul, and not true of the seeds of animals? For what you say of the flesh of a dead animal, that it is unclean because there is no soul in it, cannot be said of the seed of the animal; for you hold that it keeps confined the soul which will appear in the offspring, and you avow that the soul of Manichaeus himself is thus confined. And as your followers cannot bring these seeds to you for purification, who will not suspect that you make this purification secretly among yourselves, and hide it from your followers, in case they should leave you? If you do not these things, as it is to be hoped you do not, still you see how open to suspicion your superstition is, and how impossible it is to blame men for thinking what your own profession suggests, when you maintain that you set free souls from bodies and from senses by eating and drinking. I wish to say no more about this: you see yourselves what room there is here for denunciation. But as the matter is one rather to repress than to invite remark, and also as throughout my discourse my purpose appears of exaggerating nothing, and of keeping to bare facts and arguments, we shall pass on to other matters.

## CHAPTER 19

### CRIMES OF THE MANICHAEANS

67. We see then, now, the nature of your three symbols. These are your customs. This is the end of your notable precepts, in which there is nothing sure, nothing steadfast, nothing consistent, nothing irreproachable, but all doubtful, or rather undoubtedly and entirely false, all contradictory, abominable, absurd. In a word, evil practices are detected in your customs so many and so serious, that one wishing to denounce them all, if he were at all able to enlarge, would require at least a separate treatise for each. Were

you to observe these, and to act up to your profession, no childishness, or folly, or absurdity would go beyond yours; and when you praise and teach these things without doing them, you display craft and deceit and malevolence equal to anything that can be described or imagined.

68. During nine full years that I attended you with great earnestness and assiduity, I could not hear of one of your elect who was not found transgressing these precepts, or at least was not suspected of doing so. Many were caught at wine and animal food, many at the baths; but this we only heard by report. Some were proved to have seduced other men's wives, so that in this case I could not doubt the truth of the charge. But suppose this, too, a report rather than a fact. I myself saw, and not I only, but others who have either escaped from that superstition, or will, I hope, yet escape,—we saw, I say, in a square in Carthage, on a road much frequented, not one, but more than three of the elect walking behind us, and accosting some women with such indecent sounds and gestures as to outdo the boldness and insolence of all ordinary rascals. And it was clear that this was quite habitual, and that they behaved in this way to one another, for no one was deterred by the presence of a companion, showing that most of them, if not all, were affected with this evil tendency. For they did not all come from one house, but lived in quite different places, and quite accidentally left together the place where they had met. It was a great shock to us, and we lodged a complaint about it. But who thought of inflicting punishment,—I say not by separation from the church, but even by severe rebuke in proportion to the heinousness of the offence?

69. All the excuse given for the impunity of those men was that, at that time, when their meetings were forbidden by law, it was feared that the persons suffering punishment might retaliate by giving information. What then of their assertion that they will always have persecution in this world, for which they suppose that they will be thought the more of? for this is the application they make of the words about the world hating them. And they will have it that truth must be sought for among them, because, in the promise of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, it is said that the world cannot receive Him. This is not the place to discuss this question. But clearly, if you are always to be persecuted, even to the end of the world, there will be

no end to this laxity, and to the unchecked spread of all this immorality, from your fear of giving offence to men of this character.

70. This answer was also given to us, when we reported to the very highest authorities that a woman had complained to us that in a meeting, where she was along with other women, not doubting of the sanctity of these people, some of the elect came in, and when one of them had put out the lamp, one, whom she could not distinguish, tried to embrace her, and would have forced her into sin, had she not escaped by crying out. How common must we conclude the practice to have been which led to the misdeed on this occasion! And this was done on the night when you keep the feast of vigils. Forsooth, besides the fear of information being given, no one could bring the offender before the bishop, as he had so well guarded against being recognized. As if all who entered along with him were not implicated in the crime; for in their indecent merriment they all wished the lamp to be put out.

71. Then what wide doors were opened for suspicions, when we saw them full of envy, full of covetousness, full of greed for costly foods, constantly at strife, easily excited about trifles! We concluded that they were not competent to abstain from the things they professed to abstain from, if they found an opportunity in secret or in the dark. There were two of sufficiently good character, of active minds, and leaders in their debates, with whom we had a more particular and intimate acquaintance than with the rest. One of them was much associated with us, because he was also engaged in liberal studies; he is said to be now an elder there. These two were very jealous of one another, and one accused the other—not openly, but in conversation, as he had opportunity, and in whispers—of having made a criminal assault on the wife of one of the followers. He again, in clearing himself to us, brought the same charge against another of the elect, who lived with this follower as his most trusted friend. He had, going in suddenly, caught this man with the woman, and his enemy and rival had advised the woman and her paramour to raise this false report about him, that he might not be believed if he gave any information. We were much distressed, and took it greatly to heart, that although there was a doubt about the assault on the woman, the jealous

feeling in those two men, than whom we found none better in the place, showed itself so keenly, and inevitably raised a suspicion of other things.

72. Another thing was, that we very often saw in theatres men belonging to the elect, men of years and, it was supposed, of character, along with a hoary-headed elder. We pass over the youths, whom we used to come upon quarrelling about the people connected with the stage and the races; from which we may safely conclude how they would be able to refrain in secret, when they could not subdue the passion by which they were exposed in the eyes of their followers, bringing on them disgrace and flight. In the case of the saint, whose discussions we attended in the street of the fig-sellers, would his atrocious crime have been discovered if he had been able to make the dedicated virgin his wife without making her pregnant? The swelling womb betrayed the secret and unthought-of iniquity. When her brother, a young man, heard of it from his mother, he felt keenly the injury, but refrained, from regard to religion, from a public accusation. He succeeded in getting the man expelled from that church, for such conduct cannot always be tolerated; and that the crime might not be wholly unpunished, he arranged with some of his friends to have the man well beaten and kicked. When he was thus assailed, he cried out that they should spare him, from regard to the authority of the opinion of Manichaeus, that Adam the first hero had sinned, and was a greater saint after his sin.

73. This, in fact, is your notion about Adam and Eve. It is a long story; but I will touch only on what concerns the present matter. You say that Adam was produced from his parents, the abortive princes of darkness; that he had in his soul the most part of light, and very little of the opposite race. So while he lived a holy life, on account of the prevalence of good, still the opposite part in him was stirred up, so that he was led away into conjugal intercourse. Thus he fell and sinned, but afterwards lived in greater holiness. Now, my complaint is not so much about this wicked man, who, under the garb of an elect and holy man, brought such shame and reproach on a family of strangers by his shocking immorality. I do not charge you with this. Let it be attributed to the abandoned character of the man, and not to your habits. I blame the man for the atrocity, and not you. Still there is this in you all that cannot, as far as I can see, be admitted or tolerated, that

while you hold the soul to be part of God, you still maintain that the mixture of a little evil prevailed over the superior force and quantity of good. Who that believes this, when incited by passion, will not find here an excuse, instead of checking and controlling his passion?

## CHAPTER 20

### DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT DISCOVERED AT ROME

74. What more shall I say of your customs? I have mentioned what I found myself when I was in the city when the things were done. To go through all that happened at Rome in my absence would take a long time. I will, however, give a short account of it; for the matter became so notorious, that even the absent could not remain in ignorance of it. And when I was afterwards in Rome, I ascertained the truth of all I had heard, although the story was told me by an eye-witness whom I knew so well and esteemed so highly, that I could not feel any doubt about it. One of your followers, then, quite equal to the elect in their far-famed abstinence, for he was both liberally educated, and was in the habit of defending your sect with great zeal, took it very ill that he had cast in his teeth the vile conduct of the elect, who lived in all kinds of places, and went hither and thither for lodging of the worst description. He therefore desired, if possible, to assemble all who were willing to live according to the precepts into his own house, and to maintain them at his own expense; for he was above the average in carelessness as to spending money, besides being above the average in the amount he had to spend. He complained that his efforts were hindered by the remissness of the bishops, whose assistance he required for success. At last one of your bishops was found,—a man, as I know, very rude and unpolished, but somehow, from his very moroseness, the more inclined to strict observance of morality. The follower eagerly lays hold of this man as the person he had long wished for and found at last, and relates his whole plan. He approves and assents, and agrees to be the first to take up his abode in the house. When this was done, all the elect who could be at Rome were assembled there. The rule of life in the epistle of Manichaeus was laid before them. Many thought it intolerable, and left; not a few felt ashamed, and stayed. They began to live as they had agreed, and as this high authority enjoined. The follower all the time was zealously enforcing everything on

everybody, though never, in any case, what he did not undertake himself. Meanwhile quarrels constantly arose among the elect. They charged one another with crimes, all which he lamented to hear, and managed to make them unintentionally expose one another in their altercations. The revelations were vile beyond description. Thus appeared the true character of those who were unlike the rest in being willing to bend to the yoke of the precepts. What then is to be suspected, or rather, concluded, of the others? To come to a close, they gathered together on one occasion and complained that they could not keep the regulations. Then came rebellion. The follower stated his case most concisely, that either all must be kept, or the man who had given such a sanction to such precepts, which no one could fulfill, must be thought a great fool. But, as was inevitable, the wild clamor of the mob prevailed over the opinion of one man. The bishop himself gave way at last, and took to flight with great disgrace; and he was said to have got in provisions by stealth, contrary to rule, which were often discovered. He had a supply of money from his private purse, which he carefully kept concealed.

75. If you say these things are false, you contradict what is too clear and public. But you may say so if you like. For, as the things are certain, and easily known by those who wish to know them, those who deny that they are true show what their habit of telling the truth is. But you have other replies with which I do not find fault. For you either say that some do keep your precepts, and that they should not be mixed up with the guilty in condemning the others; or that the whole inquiry into the character of the members of your sect is wrong, for the question is of the character of the profession. Should I grant both of these (although you can neither point out those faithful observers of the precepts, nor clear your heresy of all those frivolities and iniquities), still I must insist on knowing why you heap reproaches on Christians of the Catholic name on seeing the immoral life of some, while you either have the effrontery to repel inquiry about your members, or the still greater effrontery not to repel it, wishing it to be understood that in your scanty membership there are some unknown individuals who keep the precepts they profess, but that among the multitudes in the Catholic Church there are none.

# ON THE PROFIT OF BELIEVING

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

DE UTILITATE CREDENDI.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A.

Retract. i. cap. 14. Moreover now at Hippo-Regius as Presbyter I wrote a book on the Profit of Believing, to a friend of mine who had been taken in by the Manichees, and whom I knew to be still held in that error, and to deride the Catholic school of Faith, in that men were bid believe, but not taught what was truth by a most certain method. In this book I said, &c. \* \* \*. This book begins thus, “Si mihi Honorate, unum atque idem videretur esse.”

St. Augustin enumerates his book on the Profit of Believing first amongst those he wrote as Presbyter, to which order he was raised at Hippo about the beginning of the year 391. The person for whom he wrote had been led into error by himself, and appears to have been recovered from it, at least if he is the same who wrote to St. Augustin from Carthage about 412, proposing several questions, and to whom St. Augustin wrote his 140th Epistle. Cassiodorus calls him a Presbyter, though at that time he was not baptized. In Ep. 83, St. Augustin speaks of the death of another Honoratus, a Presbyter. Towards the end of his life he also wrote his 228th Epistle to a Bishop of Thabenna of the same name.—(Bened. Ed.)

The remarks in the Retractations are given in notes to the passages where they occur.



1. IF, Honoratus, a heretic, and a man trusting heretics seemed to me one and the same, I should judge it my duty to remain silent both in tongue and pen in this matter. But now, whereas there is a very great difference between these two: forasmuch as he, in my opinion, is an heretic, who, for the sake of some temporal advantage, and chiefly for the sake of his own glory and pre-eminence, either gives birth to, or follows, false and new opinions; but he, who trusts men of this kind, is a man deceived by a certain imagination of truth and piety. This being the case, I have not thought it my duty to be silent towards you, as to my opinions on the finding and retaining of truth: with great love of which, as you know, we have burned from our very earliest youth: but it is a thing far removed from the minds of vain men, who, having too far advanced and fallen into these corporeal things, think that there is nothing else than what they perceive by those five well-known reporters of the body; and what impressions and images they have received from these, they carry over with themselves, even when they essay to withdraw from the senses; and by the deadly and most deceitful rule of these think that they measure most rightly the unspeakable recesses of truth. Nothing is more easy, my dearest friend, than for one not only to say, but also to think, that he hath found out the truth; but how difficult it is in reality, you will perceive, I trust, from this letter of mine. And that this may profit you, or at any rate may in no way harm you, and also all, into whose hands it shall chance to come, I have both prayed, and do pray, unto God; and I hope that it will be so, forasmuch as I am fully conscious that I have undertaken to write it, in a pious and friendly spirit, not as aiming at vain reputation, or trifling display.

2. It is then my purpose to prove to you, if I can, that the Manichees profanely and rashly inveigh against those, who, following the authority of the Catholic Faith, before that they are able to gaze upon that Truth, which the pure mind beholds, are by believing forearmed, and prepared for God Who is about to give them light. For you know, Honoratus, that for no other reason we fell in with such men, than because they used to say, that, apart from all terror of authority, by pure and simple reason, they would lead within to God, and set free from all error those who were willing to be their hearers. For what else constrained me, during nearly nine years, spurning the religion which had been set in me from a child by my parents, to be a

follower and diligent hearer of those men, save that they said that we are alarmed by superstition, and are commanded to have faith before reason, but that they urge no one to have faith, without having first discussed and made clear the truth? Who would not be enticed by such promises, especially the mind of a young man desirous of the truth, and further a proud and talkative mind by discussions of certain learned men in the school? such as they then found me, disdainful forsooth as of old wives' fables, and desirous to grasp and drink in, what they promised, the open and pure Truth? But what reason, on the other hand, recalled me, not to be altogether joined to them, so that I continued in that rank which they call of Hearers, so that I resigned not the hope and business of this world; save that I noticed that they also are rather eloquent and full in refutation of others, than abide firm and sure in proof of what is their own. But of myself what shall I say, who was already a Catholic Christian? teats which now, after very long thirst, I almost exhausted and dry, have returned to with all greediness, and with deeper weeping and groaning have shaken together and wrung them out more deeply, that so there might flow what might be enough to refresh me affected as I was, and to bring back hope of life and safety. What then shall I say of myself? You, not yet a Christian, who, through encouragement from me, execrating them greatly as you did, were hardly led to believe that you ought to listen to them and make trial of them, by what else, I pray you, were you delighted, call to mind, I entreat you, save by a certain great presumption and promise of reasons? But because they disputed long and much with very great copiousness and vehemence concerning the errors of unlearned men, a thing which I learned too late at length to be most easy for any moderately educated man; if even of their own they implanted in us any thing, we thought that we were obliged to retain it, insomuch as there fell not in our way other things, wherein to acquiesce. So they did in our case what crafty fowlers are wont to do, who set branches smeared with bird-lime beside water to deceive thirsty birds. For they fill up and cover anyhow the other waters which are around, or fright them from them by alarming devices, that they may fall into their snares, not through choice, but want.

3. But why do I not make answer to myself, that these fair and clever similies, and charges of this nature may be poured forth against all who are

teachers of any thing by any adversary, with abundance of wit and sarcasm? But I thought that I ought to insert something of this kind in my letter, in order to admonish them to give over such proceedings; so that, as he says, apart from trifles of common-places, matter may contend with matter, cause with cause, reason with reason. Wherefore let them give over that saying, which they have in their mouths as though of necessity, when any one, who hath been for some long time a hearer, hath left them; "The Light hath made a passage through him." For you see, you who are my chief care, (for I am not over anxious about them,) how empty this is, and most easy for any one to find fault with. Therefore I leave this for your own wisdom to consider. For I have no fear that you will think me possessed by indwelling Light, when I was entangled in the life of this world, having a darkened hope, of beauty of wife, of pomp of riches, of emptiness of honors, and of all other hurtful and deadly pleasures. For all these, as is not unknown to you, I ceased not to desire and hope for, at the time when I was their attentive hearer. And I do not lay this to the charge of their teaching; for I also confess that they also carefully advise to shun these. But now to say that I am deserted by light, when I have turned myself from all these shadows of things, and have determined to be content with that diet merely which is necessary for health of body; but that I was enlightened and shining, at a time when I loved these things, and was wrapped up in them, is the part of a man, to use the mildest expression, wanting in a keen insight into matters, on which he loves to speak at length. But, if you please, let us come to the cause in hand.

4. For you well know that the Manichees move the unlearned by finding fault with the Catholic Faith, and chiefly by rending in pieces and tearing the Old Testament: and they are utterly ignorant, how far these things are to be taken, and how drawn out they descend with profit into the veins and marrows of souls as yet as it were but able to cry. And because there are in them certain things which are some slight offense to minds ignorant and careless of themselves, (and there are very many such,) they admit of being accused in a popular way: but defended in a popular way they cannot be, by any great number of persons, by reason of the mysteries that are contained in them. But the few, who know how to do this, do not love public and much talked of controversies and disputes: and on this account are very

little known, save to such as are most earnest in seeking them out. Concerning then this rashness of the Manichees, whereby they find fault with the Old Testament and the Catholic Faith, listen, I entreat you, to the considerations which move me. But I desire and hope that you will receive them in the same spirit in which I say them. For God, unto Whom are known the secrets of my conscience knows, that in this discourse I am doing nothing of evil craft; but, as I think it should be received, for the sake of proving the truth, for which one thing we have now long ago determined to live; and with incredible anxiety, lest it may have been most easy for me to err with you, but most difficult, to use no harder term, to hold the right way with you. But I venture to anticipate that, in this hope, wherein I hope that you will hold with us the way of wisdom, He will not fail me, unto Whom I have been consecrated; Whom day and night I endeavor to gaze upon: and since, by reason of my sins, and by reason of past habit, having the eye of the mind wounded by strokes of feeble opinions, I know that I am without strength, I often entreat with tears, and as, after long blindness and darkness the eyes being hardly opened, and as yet, by frequent throbbing and turning away, refusing the light which yet they long after; specially if one endeavor to show to them the very sun; so it has now befallen me, who do not deny that there is a certain unspeakable and singular good of the soul, which the mind sees; and who with tears and groaning confess that I am not yet worthy of it. He will not then fail me, if I feign nothing, if I am led by duty, if I love truth, if I esteem friendship, if I fear much lest you be deceived.

5. All that Scripture therefore, which is called the Old Testament, is handed down fourfold to them who desire to know it, according to history, according to aetiology, according to analogy, according to allegory. Do not think me silly for using Greek words. In the first place, because I have so received, nor do I dare to make known to you otherwise than I have received. Next you yourself perceive, that we have not in use terms for such things: and had I translated and made such, I should have been indeed more silly: but, were I to use circumlocution, I should be less free in treating: this only I pray you to believe, that in whatever way I err, I am not inflated or swollen in any thing that I do. Thus (for example) it is handed down according to history, when there is taught what hath been written, or what

hath been done; what not done, but only written as though it had been done. According to aetiology, when it is shown for what cause any thing hath been done or said. According to analogy, when it is shown that the two Testaments, the Old and the New, are not contrary the one to the other. According to allegory, when it is taught that certain things which have been written are not to be taken in the letter, but are to be understood in a figure.

6. All these ways our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles used. For when it had been objected that His disciples had plucked the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, the instance was taken from history; “Have ye not read,” saith He, “what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests?” But the instance pertains to aetiology, that, when Christ had forbidden a wife to be put away, save for the cause of fornication, and they, who asked Him, had alleged that Moses had granted permission after a writing of divorcement had been given, This, saith He, “Moses did because of the hardness of your heart.” For here a reason was given, why that had been well allowed by Moses for a time; that this command of Christ might seem to show that now the times were other. But it were long to explain the changes of these times, and their order arranged and settled by a certain marvellous appointment of Divine Providence.

7. And further, analogy, whereby the agreement of both Testaments is plainly seen, why shall I say that all have made use of, to whose authority they yield; whereas it is in their power to consider with themselves, how many things they are wont to say have been inserted in the divine Scriptures by certain, I know not who, corrupters of truth? Which speech of theirs I always thought to be most weak, even at the time that I was their hearer: nor I alone, but you also, (for I well remember,) and all of us, who essayed to exercise a little more care in forming a judgment than the crowd of hearers. But now, after that many things have been expounded and made clear to me, which used chiefly to move me: those I mean, wherein their discourse for the most part boasts itself, and expatiates the more freely, the more safely it can do so as having no opponent; it seems to me that there is no assertion of theirs more shameless, or (to use a milder phrase) more

careless and weak than that the divine Scriptures have been corrupted; whereas there are no copies in existence, in a matter of so recent date, whereby they can prove it. For were they to assert, that they thought not that they ought thoroughly to receive them, because they had been written by persons, who they thought had not written the truth; any how their refusal would be more right, or their error more natural. For this is what they have done in the case of the Book which is inscribed the Acts of the Apostles. And this device of theirs, when I consider with myself, I cannot enough wonder at. For it is not the want of wisdom in the men that I complain of in this matter, but the want of ordinary understanding. For that book hath so great matters, which are like what they receive, that it seems to me great folly to refuse to receive this book also, and if any thing offend them there to call it false and inserted. Or, if such language is shameless, as it is why in the Epistles of Paul, why in the four books of the Gospel, do they think that they are of any avail, in which I am not sure but that there are in proportion many more things, than could be in that book, which they will have believed to have been interpolated by falsifiers. But forsooth this is what I believe to be the case, and I ask of you to consider it with me with as calm and serene a judgment as possible. For you know that, essaying to bring the person of their founder Manichaeus into the number of the Apostles, they say that the Holy Spirit, Whom the Lord promised His disciples that He would send, hath come to us through him. Therefore, were they to receive those Acts of the Apostles, in which the coming of the Holy Spirit is plainly set forth, they could not find how to say that it was interpolated. For they will have it that there were some, I know not who, falsifiers of the divine Books before the times of Manichaeus himself; and that they were falsified by persons who wished to combine the Law of the Jews with the Gospel. But this they cannot say concerning the Holy Spirit, unless haply they assert that those persons divined, and set in their books what should be brought forward against Manichaeus, who should at some future time arise, and say that the Holy Spirit had been sent through him. But concerning the Holy Spirit we will speak somewhat more plainly in another place. Now let us return to my purpose.

8. For that both history of the Old Testament, and aetiology, and analogy are found in the New Testament, has been, as I think, sufficiently proved: it

remains to show this of allegory. Our Redeemer Himself in the Gospel uses allegory out of the Old Testament. "This generation," saith He, "seeketh a sign, and there shall not be given it save the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so also shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." For why should I speak of the Apostle Paul, who in his first Epistle to the Corinthians shows that even the very history of the Exodus was an allegory of the future Christian People. "But I would not that ye should be ignorant, brethren, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized into Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed with them; and that Rock was Christ. But in the more part of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. But these things were figures of us, that we be not lustful of evil things, as they also lusted. Neither let us worship idols, as certain of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as certain of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand men. Neither let us tempt Christ, as certain of them tempted, and perished of serpents. Neither murmur we, as certain of them murmured, and perished of the destroyer. But all these things happened unto them in a figure. But they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come." There is also in the Apostle a certain allegory, which indeed greatly relates to the cause in hand, for this reason that they themselves are wont to bring it forward, and make a display of it in disputing. For the same Paul says to the Galatians, "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one of a bond-maid, and one of a free woman. But he who was of the bond-maid was born after the flesh: but he who was of the free woman, by promise: which things were spoken by way of allegory. For these are the two Testaments, one of Mount Sinai gendering unto bondage, which is Agar: for Sinai is a mount in Arabia, which bordereth upon that Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But that Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

9. Here therefore these men too evil, while they essay to make void the Law, force us to approve these Scriptures. For they mark what is said, that

they who are under the Law are in bondage, and they keep flying above the rest that last saying, “Ye are made empty of Christ, as many of you as are justified in the Law; ye have fallen from Grace.” We grant that all these things are true, and we say that the Law is not necessary, save for them unto whom bondage is yet profitable: and that the Law was on this account profitably enacted, in that men, who could not be recalled from sins by reason, needed to be restrained by such a Law, that is to say, by the threats and terrors of those punishments which can be seen by fools: from which when the Grace of Christ sets us free, it condemns not that Law, but invites us at length to yield obedience to its love, not to be slaves to the fear of the Law. Itself is Grace, that is free gift, which they understand not to have come to them from God, who still desire to be under the bonds of the Law. Whom Paul deservedly rebukes as unbelievers, because they do not believe that now through our Lord Jesus they have been set free from that bondage, under which they were placed for a certain time by the most just appointment of God. Hence is that saying of the same Apostle, “For the Law was our schoolmaster in Christ.” He therefore gave to men a schoolmaster to fear, Who after gave a Master to love. And yet in these precepts and commands of the Law, which now it is not allowed Christians to use, such as either the Sabbath, or Circumcision, or Sacrifices, and if there be any thing of this kind, so great mysteries are contained, as that every pious person may understand, there is nothing more deadly than that whatever is there be understood to the letter, that is, to the word: and nothing more healthful than that it be unveiled in the Spirit. Hence it is: “The letter killeth, but the Spirit quickeneth.” Hence it is, “That same veil remaineth in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is not taken away; since it is made void in Christ.” For there is made void in Christ, not the Old Testament, but its veil: that so through Christ that may be understood, and, as it were, laid bare, which without Christ is obscure and covered. Forasmuch as the same Apostle straightway adds, “But when thou shalt have passed over to Christ, the veil shall be taken away.” For he saith not, the Law shall be taken away, or, the Old Testament. Not therefore through the Grace of the Lord, as though useless things were there hidden, have they been taken away; but rather the covering whereby useful things were covered. In this manner all they are dealt with, who earnestly and piously, not disorderly and shamelessly, seek the sense of those Scriptures,



and they are carefully shown both the order of events, and the causes of deeds and words, and so great agreement of the Old Testament with the New, that there is left no jot that agrees not; and so great secrets of figures, that all the things that are drawn forth by interpretation force them to confess that they are wretched, who will to condemn these before they learn them.

10. But, passing over in the mean while the depth of knowledge, to deal with you as I think I ought to deal with my intimate friend; that is, as I have myself power, not as I have wondered at the power of very learned men; there are three kinds of error, whereby men err, when they read anything. I will speak of them one by one. The first kind is, wherein that which is false is thought true, whereas the writer thought otherwise. A second kind, although not so extensive, yet not less hurtful, when that, which is false, is thought true, yet the thought is the same as that of the writer. A third kind, when from the writing of another some truth is understood, whereas the writer understood it not. In which kind there is no little profit, rather, if you consider carefully, the whole entire fruit of reading. An instance of the first kind is, as if any one, for example, should say and believe that Rhadamanthus hears and judges the causes of the dead in the realms below, because he hath so read in the strain of Maro. For this one errs in two ways: both in that he believes a thing not to be believed, and also in that he, whom he reads, is not to be thought to have believed it. The second kind may be thus noticed: if one, because Lucretius writes that the soul is formed of atoms, and that after death it is dissolved into the same atoms and perishes, were to think this to be true and what he ought to believe. For this one also is not less wretched, if, in a matter of so great moment, he hath persuaded himself of that which is false, as certain; although Lucretius, by whose books he hath been deceived, held this opinion. For what doth it profit this one to be assured of the meaning of the author, whereas he hath chosen him to himself not so as through him to escape error, but so as with him to err. An instance suited to the third kind is, if one, after having read in the books of Epicurus some place wherein he praises continence, were to assert that he had made the chief good to consist in virtue, and that therefore he is not to be blamed. For how is this man injured by the error of Epicurus, what though Epicurus believe that bodily pleasure is the chief good of man:

whereas he hath not surrendered up himself to so base and hurtful an opinion, and is pleased with Epicurus for no other reason, than that he thinks him not to have held sentiments which ought not to be holden. This error is not only natural to man, but often also most worthy of a man. For what, if word were brought to me, concerning some one whom I loved, that, when now he was of bearded age, he had said, in the hearing of many, that he was so pleased with boyhood and childhood, as even to swear that he wished to live after the same fashion, and that that was so proved to me, as that I should be shameless to deny it: I should not, should I, seem worthy of blame, if I thought that, in saying this, he wished to show, that he was pleased with the innocence, and with the temper of mind alien from those desires in which the race of man is wrapped up, and from this circumstance should love him yet more and more, than I used to love him before; although perhaps he had been foolish enough to love in the age of children a certain freedom in play and food, and an idle ease? For suppose that he had died after this report had reached me, and that I had been unable to make any inquiry of him, so as for him to open his meaning; would there be any one so shameless as to be angry with me, for praising the man's purpose and wish, through those very words which I had heard? What, that even a just judge of matters would not hesitate perhaps to praise my sentiment and wish, in that both I was pleased with innocence, and, as man of man, in a matter of doubt, preferred to think well, when it was in my power also to think ill?

11. And, this being so, hear also just so many conditions and differences of the same Scriptures. For it must be that just so many meet us. For either any one hath written profitably, and is not profitably understood by some one: or both take place unprofitably: or the reader understands profitably, whereas he, who is read, hath written contrariwise. Of these the first I blame not, the last I regard not. For neither can I blame the man, who without any fault of his own hath been ill understood; nor can I be distressed at any one being read, who hath failed to see the truth, when I see that the readers are no way injured. There is then one kind most approved, and as it were most cleansed, when both the things written are well, and are taken in a good sense by the readers. And yet that also is still further divided into two: for it doth not altogether shut out error. For it generally

comes to pass, that, when a writer hath held a good sense, the reader also holds a good sense; still other than he, and often better, often worse, yet profitably. But when both we hold the same sense as he whom we read, and that is every way suited to right conduct of life, there is the fullest possible measure of truth, and there is no place opened for error from any other quarter. And this kind is altogether very rare, when what we read is matter of extreme obscurity: nor can it, in my opinion, be clearly known, but only believed. For by what proofs shall I so gather the will of a man who is absent or dead, as that I can swear to it: when, even if he were questioned being present, there might be many things, which, if he were no ill man, he would most carefully hide? But I think that it hath nothing to do towards learning the matter of fact, of what character the writer was; yet is he most fairly believed good, whose writings have benefited the human race and posterity.

12. Wherefore I would that they would tell me, in what kind they place the, supposed, error of the Catholic Church. If in the first, it is altogether a grave charge; but it needs not a far-fetched defense: for it is enough to deny that we so understand, as the persons, who inveigh against us, suppose. If in the second, the charge is not less grave; but they shall be refuted by the same saying. If in the third, it is no charge at all. Proceed, and next consider the Scriptures themselves. For what objection do they raise against the books of (what is called) the Old Testament? Is it that they are good, but are understood by us in an ill sense? But they themselves do not receive them. Or is it that they are neither good, nor are well understood? But our defense above is enough to drive them from this position. Or is it this that they will say, although they are understood by you in a good sense, yet they are evil? What is this other than to acquit living adversaries, with whom they have to do, and to accuse men long ago dead, with whom they have no strife? I indeed believe that both those men profitably delivered to memory all things, and that they were great and divine. And that that Law was published, and framed by the command and will of God: and of this, although I have but very slight knowledge of books of that kind, yet I can easily persuade any, if there apply to me a mind fair and no way obstinate: and this I will do, when you shall grant to me your ears and mind well

disposed: this however when it shall be in my power: but now is it not enough for me, however that matter may stand, not to have been deceived?

13. I call to witness, Honoratus, my conscience, and God Who hath His dwelling in pure souls, that I account nothing more prudent, chaste, and religious, than are all those Scriptures, which under the name of the Old Testament the Catholic Church retains. You wonder at this, I am aware. For I cannot hide that we were far otherwise persuaded. But there is indeed nothing more full of rashness, (which at that time, being boys, we had in us,) than in the case of each several book, to desert expounders, who profess that they hold them, and that they can deliver them to their scholars, and to seek their meaning from those, who, I know not from what cause compelling, have proclaimed a most bitter war against the framers and authors of them. For who ever thought that the hidden and dark books of Aristotle were to be expounded to him by one who was the enemy of Aristotle; to speak of these systems of teaching, wherein a reader may perhaps err without sacrilege? Who, in fine, willed to read or learn the geometrical writings of Archimedes, under Epicurus as a master; against which Epicurus used to argue with great obstinacy, so far as I judge, understanding them not at all? What are those Scriptures of the law most plain, against which, as though set forth in public, these men make their attack in vain and to no purpose? And they seem to me to be like that weak woman, whom these same men are wont to mock at, who enraged at the sun being extolled to her, and recommended as an object of worship by a certain female Manichee, being as she was simple-minded and of a religious spirit, leaped up in haste, and often striking with her foot that spot on which the sun through the window cast light, began to cry out, Lo, I trample on the sun and your God: altogether after a foolish and womanish manner; Who denies it? But do not those men seem to you to be such, who, in matters which they understand not, either wherefore, or altogether of what kind they are, although like to matters cast in the way, yet to such as understand them exact and divine, rending them with great onset of speech and reproaches, think that they are effecting something, because the unlearned applaud them? Believe me, whatever there is in these Scriptures, it is lofty and divine: there is in them altogether truth, and a system of teaching most suited to refresh and renew minds: and clearly so ordered in measure, as

that there is no one but may draw thence, what is enough for himself, if only he approach to draw with devotion and piety, as true religion demands. To prove this to you, needs many reasons and a longer discourse. For first I must so treat with you as that you may not hate the authors themselves; next, so as that you may love them: and this I must treat in any other way, rather than by expounding their meanings and words. For this reason, because in case we hated Virgil, nay, rather in case we loved him not, before understanding him, by the commendation of our forefathers, we should never be satisfied on those questions about him without number, by which grammarians are wont to be disquieted and troubled; nor should we listen willingly to one who solved these at the same time praising him; but should favor that one who by means of these essayed to show that he had erred and doated. But now, whereas many essay to open these, and each (in a different way according to his capacity, we applaud these in preference, through whose exposition the poet is found better, who is believed, even by those who do not understand him, not only in nothing to have offended, but also to have sung nothing but what was worthy of praise. So that in some minute question, we are rather angry with the master who fails, and has not what to answer, than think him silent through any fault in Maro. And now, if, in order to defend himself, he should wish to assert a fault in so great an author, hardly will his scholars remain with him, even after they have paid his fee. How great matter were it, that we should shew like good will towards them, of whom it hath been confirmed by so long time of old that the Holy Spirit spake by them? But, forsooth, we youths of the greatest understanding, and marvellous searchers out of reasons, without having at least unrolled these writings, without having sought teachers, without having somewhat chided our own dullness, lastly, without having yielded our heart even in a measure to those who have willed that writings of this kind be so long read, kept, and handled through the whole world; have thought that nothing in them is to be believed, moved by the speech of those who are unfriendly and hostile to them, with whom, under a false promise of reason, we should be compelled to believe and cherish thousands of fables.

14. But now I will proceed with what I have begun, if I can, and I will so treat with you, as not in the mean while to lay open the Catholic Faith, but,

in order that they may search out its great mysteries, to show to those who have a care for their souls, hope of divine fruit, and of the discerning of truth. No one doubts of him who seeks true religion, either that he already believes that there is an immortal soul for that religion to profit, or that he also wishes to find that very thing in this same religion. Therefore all religion is for the sake of the soul; for howsoever the nature of the body may be, it causes no care or anxiety, especially after death, to him, whose soul possesses that whereby it is blessed. For the sake of the soul, therefore, either alone or chiefly, hath true religion, if there be any such, been appointed. But this soul, (I will consider for what reason, and I confess the matter to be most obscure,) yet errs, and is foolish, as we see, until it attain to and perceive wisdom, and perhaps this very [wisdom] is true religion. I am not, am I, sending you to fables? I am not, am I, forcing you to believe rashly? I say that our soul entangled and sunk in error and folly seeks the way of truth, if there be any such. If this be not your case, pardon me, I pray, and share with me your wisdom; but if you recognize in yourself what I say, let us, I entreat, together seek the truth.

15. Put the case that we have not as yet heard a teacher of any religion. Lo we have undertaken a new matter and business. We must seek, I suppose, them who profess this matter, if it have any existence. Suppose that we have found different persons holding different opinions, and through their difference of opinions seeking to draw persons each one to himself: but that, in the mean while, there are certain pre-eminent from being much spoken of, and from having possession of nearly all peoples. Whether these hold the truth, is a great question: but ought we not to make full trial of them first, in order that, so long as we err, being as we are men, we may seem to err with the human race itself?

16. But it will be said, the truth is with some few; therefore you already know what it is, if you know with whom it is. Said I not a little above, that we were in search of it as unlearned men? But if from the very force of truth you conjecture that few possess it, but know not who they are; what if it is thus, that there are so few who know the truth, as that they hold the multitude by their authority, whence the small number may set itself free, and, as it were, strain itself forth into those secrets? Do we not see how few

attain the highest eloquence, whereas through the whole world the schools of rhetoricians are resounding with troops of young men? What, do they, as many as desire to turn out good orators, alarmed at the multitude of the unlearned, think that they are to bestow their labor on the orations of Caecilius, or Erucius, rather than those of Tullius? All aim at these, which are confirmed by authority of our forefathers. Crowds of unlearned persons essay to learn the same, which by the few learned are received as to be learned: yet very few attain, yet fewer practise, the very fewest possible become famous. What, if true religion be some such thing? What if a multitude of unlearned persons attend the Churches, and yet that be no proof, that therefore no one is made perfect by these mysteries? And yet, if they who studied eloquence were as few as the few who are eloquent, our parents would never believe that we ought to be committed to such masters. Whereas, then, we have been called to these studies by a multitude, which is numerous in that portion of it which is made up of the unlearned, so as to become enamored of that which few can attain unto; why are we unwilling to be in the same case in religion, which perhaps we despise with great danger to our soul? For if the truest and purest worship of God, although it be found with a few, be yet found with those, with whom a multitude albeit wrapped up in lusts, and removed far from purity of understanding, agrees; (and who can doubt that this may happen?) I ask, if one were to charge us with rashness and folly, that we seek not diligently with them who teach it, that, which we are greatly anxious to discover, what can we answer? [Shall we say,] I was deterred by numbers? Why from the pursuit of liberal arts, which hardly bring any profit to this present life; why from search after money? Why from attaining unto honor; why, in fine, from gaining and keeping good health; lastly, why from the very aim at a happy life; whereas all are engaged in these, few excel; were you deterred by no numbers?

17. "But they seemed there to make absurd statements." On whose assertion? Forsooth on that of enemies, for whatever cause, for whatever reason, for this is not now the question, still enemies. Upon reading, I found it so of myself. Is it so? Without having received any instruction in poetry, you would not dare to essay to read Terentianus Maurus without a master: Asper, Cornutus, Donatus, and others without number are needed, that any poet whatever may be understood, whose strains seem to court even the

applause of the theatre; do you in the case of those books, which, however they may be, yet by the confession of well-nigh the whole human race are commonly reported to be sacred and full of divine things, rush upon them without a guide, and dare to deliver an opinion on them without a teacher; and, if there meet you any matters, which seem absurd, do not accuse rather your own dullness, and mind decayed by the corruption of this world, such as is that of all that are foolish, than those [books] which haply cannot be understood by such persons! You should seek some one at once pious and learned, or who by consent of many was said to be such, that you might be both bettered by his advice, and instructed by his learning. Was he not easy to find? He should be searched out with pains. Was there no one in the country in which you lived? What cause could more profitably force to travel? Was he quite hidden, or did he not exist on the continent? One should cross the sea. If across the sea he was not found in any place near to us, you should proceed even as far as those lands, in which the things related in those books are said to have taken place. What, Honoratus, have we done of this kind? And yet a religion perhaps the most holy, (for as yet I am speaking as though it were matter of doubt,) the opinion whereof hath by this time taken possession of the whole world, we wretched boys condemned at our own discretion and sentence. What if those things which in those same Scriptures seem to offend some unlearned persons, were so set there for this purpose, that when things were read of such as are abhorrent from the feeling of ordinary men, not to say of wise and holy men, we might with much more earnestness seek the hidden meaning. Perceive you not how the Catamite of the Bucolics, for whom the rough shepherd gushed forth into tears, men essay to interpret, and affirm that the boy Alexis, on whom Plato also is said to have composed a love strain, hath some great meaning or other, but escapes the judgment of the unlearned; whereas without any sacrilege a poet however rich may seem to have published wanton songs?

18. But in truth was there either decree of any law, or power of gainsayers, or vile character of persons consecrated, or shameful report, or newness of institution, or hidden profession, to recall us from, and forbid us, the search? There is nothing of these. All laws divine and human allow us to seek the Catholic Faith; but to hold and exercise it is allowed us at any rate



by human law, even if so long as we are in error there be a doubt concerning divine law; no enemy alarms our weakness, (although truth and the salvation of the soul, in case being diligently sought it be not found where it may with most safety, ought to be sought at any risk); the degrees of all ranks and powers most devotedly minister to this divine worship; the name of religion is most honorable and most famous. What, I pray, hinders to search out and discuss with pious and careful enquiry, whether there be here that which it must needs be few know and guard in entire purity, although the goodwill and affection of all nations conspire in its favor?

19. The case standing thus, suppose, as I said, that we are now for the first time seeking unto what religion we shall deliver up our souls, for it to cleanse and renew them; without doubt we must begin with the Catholic Church. For by this time there are more Christians, than if the Jews and idolaters be added together. But of these same Christians, whereas there are several heresies, and all wish to appear Catholics, and call all others besides themselves heretics, there is one Church, as all allow: if you consider the whole world, more full filled in number; but, as they who know affirm, more pure also in truth than all the rest. But the question of truth is another; but, what is enough for such as are in search, there is one Catholic, to which different heresies give different names whereas they themselves are called each by names of their own, which they dare not deny. From which may be understood, by judgment of umpires who are hindered by no favor, to which is to be assigned the name Catholic, which all covet. But, that no one may suppose that it is to be made matter of over garrulous or unnecessary discussion, this is at any rate one, in which human laws themselves also are in a certain way Christian. I do not wish any prejudgment to be formed from this fact, but I account it a most favorable commencement for enquiry. For we are not to fear lest the true worship of God; resting on no strength of its own, seem to need to be supported by them whom it ought to support: but, at any rate, it is perfect happiness, if the truth may be there found, where it is most safe both to search for it and to hold it: in case it cannot, then at length, at whatever risk, we must go and search some other where.

20. Having then laid down these principles, which, as I think, are so just that I ought to win this cause before you, let who will be my adversary, I

will set forth to you, as I am able, what way I followed, when I was searching after true religion in that spirit, in which I have now set forth that it ought to be sought. For upon leaving you and crossing the sea, now delaying and hesitating, what I ought to hold, what to let go; which delay rose upon me every day the more, from the time that I was a hearer of that man, whose coming was promised to us, as you know, as if from heaven, to explain all things which moved us, and found him, with the exception of a certain eloquence, such as the rest; being now settled in Italy, I reasoned and deliberated greatly with myself, not whether I should continue in that sect, into which I was sorry that I had fallen, but in what way I was to find the truth, my sighs through love of which are known to no one better than to yourself. Often it seemed to me that it could not be found, and huge waves of my thoughts would roll toward deciding in favor of the Academics. Often again, with what power I had, looking into the human soul, with so much life, with so much intelligence, with so much clearness, I thought that the truth lay not hid, save that in it the way of search lay hid, and that this same way must be taken from some divine authority. It remained to enquire what was that authority, where in so great dissensions each promised that he would deliver it. Thus there met me a wood, out of which there was no way, which I was very loath to be involved in: and amid these things, without any rest, my mind was agitated through desire of finding the truth. However, I continued to unsew myself more and more from those whom now I had proposed to leave. But there remained nothing else, in so great dangers, than with words full of tears and sorrow to entreat the Divine Providence to help me. And this I was content to do: and now certain disputations of the Bishop of Milan had almost moved me to desire, not without some hope, to enquire into many things concerning the Old Testament itself, which, as you know, we used to view as accursed, having been ill commended to us. And I had decided to be a Catechumen in the Church, unto which I had been delivered by my parents, until such time as I should either find what I wished, or should persuade myself that it needed not to be sought. Therefore had there been one who could teach me, he would find me at a very critical moment most fervently disposed and very apt to learn. If you see that you too have been long affected in this way, therefore, and with a like care for thy soul, and if now you seem to yourself to have been tossed to and fro enough, and wish to put an end to labors of

this kind, follow the pathway of Catholic teaching, which hath flowed down from Christ Himself through the Apostles even unto us, and will hereafter flow down to posterity.

21. This, you will say, is ridiculous, whereas all profess to hold and teach this: all heretics make this profession, I cannot deny it; but so, as that they promise to those whom they entice, that they will give them a reason concerning matters the most obscure: and on this account chiefly charge the Catholic [Church], that they who come to her are enjoined to believe; but they make it their boast, that they impose not a yoke of believing, but open a fount of teaching. You answer, What could be said, that should pertain more to their praise? It is not so. For this they do, without being endued with any strength, but in order to conciliate to themselves a crowd by the name of reason: on the promise of which the human soul naturally is pleased, and, without considering its own strength and state of health, by seeking the food of the sound, which is ill entrusted save to such as are in health, rushes upon the poisons of them who deceive. For true religion, unless those things be believed, which each one after, if he shall conduct himself well and shall be worthy, attains unto and understands, and altogether without a certain weighty power of authority, can in no way be rightly entered upon.

22. But perhaps you seek to have some reason given you on this very point, such as may persuade you, that you ought not to be taught by reason before faith. Which may easily be done, if only you make yourself a fair hearer. But, in order that it may be done suitably, I wish you as it were to answer my questions; and, first, to tell me, why you, think that one ought not to believe. Because, you say, credulity, from which men are called credulous, in itself, seems to me to be a certain fault: otherwise we should not use to cast this as a term of reproach. For if a suspicious man is in fault, in that he suspects things not ascertained; how much more a credulous man, who herein differs from a suspicious man, that the one allows some doubt, the other none, in matters which he knows not. In the mean while I accept this opinion and distinction. But you know that we are not wont to call a person even curious without some reproach; but we call him studious even with praise. Wherefore observe, if you please, what seems to you to be the

difference between these two. This surely, you answer, that, although both be led by great desire to know, yet the curious man seeks after things that no way pertain to him, but the studious man, on the contrary, seeks after what pertain to him. But, because we deny not that a man's wife and children, and their health, pertain unto him; if any one, being settled abroad, were to be careful to ask all comers, how his wife and children are and fare, he is surely led by great desire to know, and yet we call not this man studious, who both exceedingly wishes to know, and that (in) matters which very greatly pertain unto him. Wherefore you now understand that the definition of a studious person falters in this point, that every studious person wishes to know what pertain to himself, and yet not every one, who makes this his business, is to be called studious; but he who with all earnestness seeks those things which pertain unto the liberal culture and adornment of the mind. Yet we rightly call him one who studies, especially if we add what he studies to hear. For we may call him even studious of his own (family) if he love only his own (family), we do not however, without some addition, think him worthy of the common name of the studious. But one who was desirous to hear how his family were I should not call studious of hearing, unless taking pleasure in the good report, he should wish to hear it again and again: but one who studied, even if only once. Now return to the curious person, and tell me, if any one should be willing to listen to some tale, such as would no way profit him, that is, of matters that pertain not to him: and that not in an offensive way and frequently, but very seldom and with great moderation, either at a feast, or in some company, or meeting of any kind; would he seem to you curious? I think not: but at any rate he would certainly seem to have a care for that matter, to which he was willing to listen. Wherefore the definition of a curious person also must be corrected by the same rule as that of a studious person: Consider therefore whether the former statements also do not need to be corrected. For why should not both he, who at some time suspects something, be unworthy the name of a suspicious person; and he who at some time believes something, of a credulous person? Thus as there is very great difference between one who studies any matter, and the absolutely studious; and again between him who hath a care and the curious; so is there between him who believes and the credulous.

23. But you will say, consider now whether we ought to believe in religion. For, although we grant that it is one thing to believe, another to be credulous, it does not follow that it is no fault to believe in matters of religion. For what if it be a fault both to believe and to be credulous, as (it is) both to be drunk and to be a drunkard? Now he who thinks this certain, it seems to me can have no friend; for, if it is base to believe any thing, either he acts basely who believes a friend, or in nothing believing a friend I see not how he can call either him or himself a friend. Here perhaps you may say, I grant that we must believe something at some time; now make plain, how in the case of religion it be not base to believe before one knows. I will do so, if I can. Wherefore I ask of you, which you esteem the graver fault, to deliver religion to one unworthy, or to believe what is said by them who deliver it. If you understand not whom I call unworthy, I call him, who approaches with feigned breast. You grant, as I suppose, that it is more blameable to unfold unto such an one whatever holy secrets there are, than to believe religious men affirming any thing on the matter of religion itself. For it would be unbecoming you to make any other answer. Wherefore now suppose him present, who is about to deliver to you a religion, in what way shall you assure him, that you approach with a true mind, and that, so far as this matter is concerned, there is in you no fraud or feigning? You will say, your own good conscience that you are no way feigning, asserting this with words as strong as you can, but yet with words. For you cannot lay open man to man the hiding places of your soul, so that you may be thoroughly known. But if he shall say, Lo, I believe you, but is it not more fair that you also believe me, when, if I hold any truth, you are about to receive, I about to give, a benefit? what will you answer, save that you must believe.

24. But you say, Were it not better that you should give me a reason, that, wherever, that shall lead me, I may follow without any rashness? Perhaps it were: but, it being so great a matter, that you are by reason to come to the knowledge of God, do you think that all are qualified to understand the reasons, by which the human soul is led to know God, or many, or few? Few I think, you say. Do you believe that you are in the number of these? It is not for me, you say, to answer this. Therefore you think it is for him to believe you in this also: and this indeed he does: only do you remember, that he hath already twice believed you saying things uncertain; that you are

unwilling to believe him even once admonishing you in a religious spirit. But suppose that it is so, and that you approach with a true mind to receive religion, and that you are one of few men in such sense as to be able to take in the reasons by which the Divine Power is brought into certain knowledge; what? do you think that other men, who are not endued with so serene a disposition, are to be denied religion? or do you think that they are to be led gradually by certain steps unto those highest inner recesses? You see clearly which is the more religious. For you cannot think that any one whatever in a case where he desires so great a thing, ought by any means to be abandoned or rejected. But do you not think, that, unless he do first believe that he shall attain unto that which he purposes; and do yield his mind as a suppliant; and, submitting to certain great and necessary precepts, do by a certain course of life thoroughly cleanse it, that he will not otherwise attain the things that are purely true? Certainly you think so. What, then, is the case of those, (of whom I already believe you to be one,) who are able most easily to receive divine secrets by sure reason, will it, I ask, be to them any hindrance at all, if they so come as they who at the first believe? I think not. But yet, you say, what need to delay them? Because although they will in no way harm themselves by what is done, yet they will harm the rest by the precedent. For there is hardly one who has a just notion of his own power: but he who has a less notion must be roused; he who has a greater notion must be checked: that neither the one be broken by despair, nor the other carried headlong by rashness. And this is easily done, if even they, who are able to fly, (that they be not alluring the occasion of any into danger,) are forced for a short time to walk where the rest also may walk with safety. This is the forethought of true religion: this the command of God: this what hath been handed down from our blessed forefathers, this what hath been preserved even unto us: to wish to distrust and overthrow this, is nothing else than to seek a sacrilegious way unto true religion. And whoso do this, not even if what they wish be granted to them are they able to arrive at the point at which they aim. For whatever kind of excellent genius they have, unless God be present, they creep on the ground. But He is then present, if they, who are aiming at God, have a regard for their fellow men. Than which step there can be found nothing more sure Heavenward. I for my part cannot resist this reasoning, for how can I say that we are to believe nothing without certain knowledge? whereas both

there can be no friendship at all, unless there be believed something which cannot be proved by some reason, and often stewards, who are slaves, are trusted by their masters without any fault on their part. But in religion what can there be more unfair than that the ministers of God believe us when we promise an unfeigned mind, and we are unwilling to believe them when they enjoin us any thing. Lastly, what way can there be more healthful, than for a man to become fitted to receive the truth by believing those things, which have been appointed by God to serve for the previous culture and treatment of the mind? Or, if you be already altogether fitted, rather to make some little circuit where it is safest to tread, than both to cause yourself danger, and to be a precedent for rashness to other men?

25. Wherefore it now remains to consider, in what manner we ought not to follow these, who profess that they will lead by reason. For how we may without fault follow those who bid us to believe, hath been already said: but unto these who make promises of reason certain think that they come, not only without blame, but also with some praise: but it is not so. For there are two (classes of) persons, praiseworthy in religion; one of those who have already found, whom also we must needs judge most blessed; another of those who are seeking with all earnestness and in the right way. The first, therefore, are already in very possession, the other on the way, yet on that way whereby they are most sure to arrive. There are three other kinds of men altogether to be disapproved of and detested. One is of those who hold an opinion, that is, of those who think that they know what they know not. Another is of those who are indeed aware that they know not, but do not so seek as to be able to find. A third is of those who neither think that they know, nor wish to seek. There are also three things, as it were bordering upon one another, in the minds of men well worth distinguishing; understanding, belief, opinion. And, if these be considered by themselves, the first is always without fault, the second sometimes with fault, the third never without fault. For the understanding of matters great, and honorable, and even divine, is most blessed. But the understanding of things unnecessary is no injury; but perhaps the learning was an injury, in that it took up the time of necessary matters. But on the matters themselves that are injurious, it is not the understanding, but the doing or suffering them, that is wretched. For not, in case any understand how an enemy may be

slain without danger to himself, is he guilty from the mere understanding, not the wish; and, if the wish be absent, what can be called more innocent? But belief is then worthy of blame, when either any thing is believed of God which is unworthy of Him, or any thing is over easily believed of man. But in all other matters if any believe aught, provided he understand that he knows it not, there is no fault. For I believe that very wicked conspirators were formerly put to death by the virtue of Cicero; but this I not only know not, but also I know for certain that I can by no means know. But opinion is on two accounts very base; in that both he who hath persuaded himself that he already knows, cannot learn; provided only it may be learnt; and in itself rashness is a sign of a mind not well disposed. For even if any suppose that he know what I said of Cicero, (although it be no hindrance to him from learning, in that the matter itself is incapable of being grasped by any knowledge;) yet, (in that he understands not that there is a great difference, whether any thing be grasped by sure reason of mind, which we call understanding, or whether for practical purposes it be entrusted to common fame or writing, for posterity to believe it,) he assuredly errs, and no error is without what is base. What then we understand, we owe to reason; what we believe, to authority; what we have an opinion on, to error. But every one who understands also believes, and also every one who has an opinion believes; not every one who believes understands, no one who has an opinion understands. Therefore if these three things be referred unto the five kinds of men, which we mentioned a little above; that is, two kinds to be approved, which we set first, and three that remain faulty; we find that the first kind, that of the blessed, believe the truth itself; but the second kind, that of such as are earnest after, and lovers of, the truth, believe authority. In which kinds, of the two, the act of belief is praiseworthy. But in the first of the faulty kinds, that is, of those who have an opinion that they know what they know not, there is an altogether faulty credulity. The other two kinds that are to be disapproved believe nothing, both they who seek the truth despairing of finding it, and they who seek it not at all. And this only in matters which pertain unto any system of teaching. For in the other business of life, I am utterly ignorant by what means a man can believe nothing. Although in the case of those also they who say that in practical matters they follow probabilities, would seem rather to be unable to know than unable to believe. For who believes not what he approves? or



how is what they follow probable, if it be not approved? Wherefore there may be two kinds of such as oppose the truth: one of those who assail knowledge alone, not faith; the other of those who condemn both: and yet again, I am ignorant whether these can be found in matters of human life. These things have been said, in order that we might understand, that, in retaining faith, even of those things which as yet we comprehend not, we are set free from the rashness of such as have an opinion. For they, who say that we are to believe nothing but what we know, are on their guard against that one name “opining,” which must be confessed to be base and very wretched, but, if they consider carefully that there is a very great difference, whether one think that he knows, or moved by some authority believe that which he understands that he knows not, surely he will escape the charge of error, and inhumanity, and pride.

26. For I ask, if what is not known must not be believed, in what way may children do service to their parents, and love with mutual affection those whom they believe not to be their parents? For it cannot, by any means, be known by reason. But the authority of the mother comes in, that it be believed of the father; but of the mother it is usually not the mother that is believed, but midwives, nurses, servants. For she, from whom a son may be stolen and another put in his place, may she not being deceived deceive? Yet we believe, and believe without any doubt, what we confess we cannot know. For who but must see, that unless it be so, filial affection, the most sacred bond of the human race, is violated by extreme pride or wickedness? For what madman even would think him to be blamed who discharged the duties that were due to those whom he believed to be his parents, although they were not so? Who, on the other hand, would not judge him to deserve banishment, who failed to love those who were perhaps his true parents, through fear lest he should love pretended. Many things may be alleged, whereby to show that nothing at all of human society remains safe, if we shall determine to believe nothing, which we cannot grasp by full apprehension.

27. But now hear, what I trust I shall by this time more easily persuade you of. In a matter of religion, that is, of the worship and knowledge of God, they are less to be followed, who forbid us to believe, making most ready

professions of reason. For no one doubts that all men are either fools or wise. But now I call wise, not clever and gifted men, but those, in whom there is, so much as may be in man, the knowledge of man himself and of God most surely received, and a life and manners suitable to that knowledge; but all others, whatever be their skill or want of skill, whatever their manner of life, whether to be approved or disapproved, I would account in the number of fools. And, this being so, who of moderate understanding but will clearly see, that it is more useful and more healthful for fools to obey the precepts of the wise, than to live by their own judgment? For everything that is done, if it be not rightly done, is a sin, nor can that any how be rightly done which proceeds not from right reason. Further, right reason is very virtue. But to whom of men is virtue at hand, save to the mind of the wise? Therefore the wise man alone sins not. Therefore every fool sins, save in those actions, in which he hath obeyed a wise man: for all such actions proceed from right reason, and, so to say, the fool is not to be accounted master of his own action, he being, as it were, the instrument and that which ministers to the wise man. Wherefore, if it be better for all men not to sin than to sin; assuredly all fools would live better, if they could be slaves of the wise. And, if no one doubts that this is better in lesser matters, as in buying and selling, and cultivating the ground, in taking a wife, in undertaking and bringing up children, lastly, in the management of household property, much more in religion. For both human matters are more easy to distinguish between, than divine; and in all matters of greater sacredness and excellence, the greater obedience and service we owe them, the more wicked and the more dangerous is it to sin. Therefore you see henceforth that nothing else is left us, so long as we are fools, if our heart be set on an excellent and religious life, but to seek wise men, by obeying whom we may be enabled both to lessen the great feeling of the rule of folly, whilst it is in us, and at the last to escape from it.

28. Here again arises a very difficult question. For in what way shall we fools be able to find a wise man, whereas this name, although hardly any one dare openly, yet most men lay claim to indirectly: so disagreeing one with another in the very matters, in the knowledge of which wisdom consists, as that it must needs be that either none of them, or but some certain one be wise? But when the fool enquires, who is that wise man? I do

not at all see, in what way he can be distinguished and perceived. For by no signs whatever can one recognize any thing, unless he shall have known that thing, whereof these are signs. But the fool is ignorant of wisdom. For not, as, in the case of gold and silver and other things of that kind, it is allowed both to know them when you see them and not to have them, thus may wisdom be seen by the mind's eye of him who hath it not. For whatever things we come into contact with by bodily sense, are presented to us from without; and therefore we may perceive by the eyes what belong to others, when we ourselves possess not any of them or of that kind. But what is perceived by the understanding is within in the mind, and to have it is nothing else than to see. But the fool is void of wisdom, therefore he knows not wisdom. For he could not see it with the eyes: but he cannot see it and not have it, nor have it and be a fool. Therefore he knoweth it not, and, so long as he knoweth it not, he cannot recognize it in another place. No one, so long as he is a fool, can by most sure knowledge find out a wise man, by obeying whom he may be set free from so great evil of folly.

29. Therefore this so vast difficulty, since our enquiry is about religion, God alone can remedy: nor indeed, unless we believe both that He is, and that He helps men's minds, ought we even to enquire after true religion itself. For what I ask do we with so great endeavor desire to search out? What do we wish to attain unto? Whither do we long to arrive? Is it at that which we believe not exists or pertains to us? Nothing is more perverse than such a state of mind. Then, when you would not dare to ask of me a kindness, or at any rate would be shameless in daring, come you to demand the discovery of religion, when you think that God neither exists, nor, if He exist, hath any care for us? What, if it be so great a matter, as that it cannot be found out, unless it be sought carefully and with all our might? What, if the very extreme difficulty of discovery be an exercise for the mind of the inquirer, in order to receive what shall be discovered? For what more pleasant and familiar to our eyes than this light? And yet men are unable after long darkness to hear and endure it. What more suited to the body exhausted by sickness than meat and drink? And yet we see that persons who are recovering are restrained and checked, lest they dare to commit themselves to the fullness of persons in health, and so bring to pass by means of their very food their return to that disease which used to reject it. I speak of

persons who are recovering. What, the very sick, do we not urge them to take something? Wherein assuredly they would not with so great discomfort obey us, if they believed not that they would recover from that disease. When then will you give yourself up to a search very full of pains and labor? When will you have the heart to impose upon yourself so great care and trouble as the matter deserves, when you believe not in the existence of that which you are in search of? Rightly therefore hath it been ordained by the majesty of the Catholic system of teaching, that they who approach unto religion be before all things persuaded to have faith.

30. Wherefore that heretic, (inasmuch as our discourse is of those who wish to be called Christians,) I ask you, what reason he alleges to me? What is there whereby for him to call me back from believing, as if from rashness? If he bid me believe nothing; I believe not that this very true religion hath any existence in human affairs; and what I believe not to exist, I seek not. But He, as I suppose, will show it to me seeking it: for so it is written, "He that seeketh shall find." Therefore I should not come unto him, who forbids me to believe, unless I believed something. Is there any greater madness, than that I should displease him by faith alone, which is founded on no knowledge, which faith alone led me to him?

31. What, that all heretics exhort us to believe in Christ? Can they possibly be more opposed to themselves? And in this matter they are to be pressed in a twofold way. In the first place we must ask of them, where is the reason which they used to promise, where the reproof of rashness, where the assumption of knowledge? For, if it be disgraceful to believe any without reason, what do you wait for, what are you busied about, that I believe some one without reason, in order that I may the more easily be led by your reason? What, will your reason raise any firm superstructure on the foundation of rashness? I speak after their manner, whom we displease by believing. For I not only judge it most healthful to believe before reason, when you are not qualified to receive reason, and by the very act of faith thoroughly to cultivate the mind to receive the seeds of truth, but altogether a thing of such sort as that without it health cannot return to sick souls. And in that this seems to them matter for mockery and full of rashness, surely they are shameless in making it their business that we believe in Christ.

Next, I confess that I have already believed in Christ, and have convinced myself that what He hath said is true, although it be supported by no reason; is this, heretic, what you will teach me in the first place? Suffer me to consider a little with myself, (since I have not seen Christ Himself, as He willed to appear unto men, Who is said to have been seen by them, even by common eyes,) who they are that I have believed concerning Him, in order that I may approach you already furnished beforehand with such a faith. I see that there are none that I have believed, save the confirmed opinion and widely extended report of peoples and nations: and that the mysteries of the Church Catholic have in all times and places had possession of these peoples. Why therefore shall I not of these, in preference to others, inquire with all care, what Christ commanded, by whose authority I have been moved already to believe that Christ hath commanded something that is profitable? Are you likely to be a better expounder to me of what He said, Whose past or present existence I should not believe, if by you I were to be recommended to believe thus? This therefore I have believed, as I said, trusting to report strengthened by numbers, agreement, antiquity. But you, who are both so few, and so turbulent, and so new, no one doubts that ye bring forward nothing worthy of authority. What then is that so great madness? Believe them, that you are to believe in Christ, and learn from us what He said. Why, I pray you? For were they to fail and to be unable to teach me any thing with much greater ease could I persuade my self, that I am not to believe in Christ, than that I am to learn any thing concerning Him, save from those through whom I had believed in Him. O vast confidence, or rather absurdity! I teach you what Christ, in Whom you believe, commanded. What, in case I believed not in Him? You could not, could you, teach me any thing concerning Him? But, says he, it behoves you to believe. You do not mean, do you, that I am (to believe) you when you commend Him to my faith? No, saith he, for we lead by reason them who believe in Him. Why then should I believe in Him? Because report hath been grounded. Whether is it through you, or through others? Through others, saith he. Shall I then believe them, in order that you may teach me? Perhaps I ought to do so, were it not that they gave me this chief charge, that I should not approach you at all; for they say that you have deadly doctrines. You will answer, They lie. How then shall I believe them concerning Christ, Whom they have not seen, (and) not believe them

concerning you, whom they are unwilling to see? Believe the Scriptures, saith he. But every writing, if it be brought forward new and unheard of, or be commended by few, with no reason to confirm it, it is not it that is believed, but they who bring it forward. Wherefore, for those Scriptures, if you are they who bring them forward, you so few and unknown, I am not pleased to believe them. At the same time also you are acting contrary to your promise, in enforcing faith rather than giving a reason. You will recall me again to numbers and (common) report. Curb, I pray you, your obstinacy, and that untamed lust, I know not what, of spreading your name: and advise me rather to seek the chief men of this multitude, and to seek with all care and pains rather to learn something concerning these writings from these men, but for whose existence, I should not know that I had to learn at all. But do you return into your dens, and lay not any snares under the name of truth, which you endeavor to take from those, to whom you yourself grant authority.

32. But if they say that we are not even to believe in Christ, unless undoubted reason shall be given us, they are not Christians. For this is what certain pagans say against us, foolishly indeed, yet not contrary to, or inconsistent with, themselves. But who can endure that these profess to belong to Christ, who contend that they are to believe nothing, unless they shall bring forward to fools most open reason concerning God? But we see that He Himself, so far as that history, which they themselves believe, teaches, willed nothing before, or more strongly than, that He should be believed in: whereas they, with whom He had to do, were not yet qualified to receive the secret things of God. For, for what other purpose are so great and so many miracles, He Himself also saying, that they are done for no other cause, than that He may be believed in? He used to lead fools by faith, you lead by reason. He used to cry out, that He should be believed in, ye cry out against it. He used to praise such as believe in Him, ye blame them. But unless either He should change water into wine, to omit other (miracles), if men would follow Him, doing no such, but (only) teaching; either we must make no account of that saying, "Believe ye God, believe also Me;" or we must charge him with rashness, who willed not that He should come into his house, believing that the disease of his servant would depart at His mere command. Therefore He bringing to us a medicine such as should heal our

utterly corrupt manners, by miracles procured to Himself authority, by authority obtained Himself belief, by belief drew together a multitude, by a multitude possessed antiquity, by antiquity strengthened religion: so that not only the utterly foolish novelty of heretics dealing deceitfully, but also the inveterate error of the nations opposing with violence, should be unable on any side to rend it asunder.

33. Wherefore, although I am not able to teach, yet I cease not to advise, that, (whereas many wish to appear wise, and it is no easy matter to discern whether they be fools,) with all earnestness, and with all prayers, and lastly with groans, or even, if so it may be, with tears, you entreat of God to set you free from the evil of error; if your heart be set on a happy life. And this will take place the more easily, if you obey with a willing mind His commands, which He hath willed should be confirmed by so great authority of the Catholic Church. For whereas the wise man is so joined to God in mind, as that there is nothing set between to separate; for God is Truth; and no one is by any means wise, unless his mind come into contact with the Truth; we cannot deny that between the folly of man, and the most pure Truth of God, the wisdom of man is set, as something in the middle. For the wise man, so far as it is given unto him, imitates God; but for a man who is a fool, there is nothing nearer to him, than a man who is wise, for him to imitate with profit: and since, as has been said, it is not easy to understand this one by reason, it behoved that certain miracles be brought near to the very eyes, which fools use with much greater readiness than the mind, that, men being moved by authority, their life and habits might first be cleansed, and they thus rendered capable of receiving reason. Whereas, therefore, it needed both that man be imitated, and that our hope be not set in man, what could be done on the part of God more full of kindness and grace, than that the very pure, eternal, unchangeable Wisdom of God, unto Whom it behoves us to cleave, should deign to take upon Him (the nature of) man? That not only He might do what should invite us to follow God, but also might suffer what used to deter us from following God. For, whereas no one can attain unto the most sure and chief good, unless he shall fully and perfectly love it; which will by no means take place, so long as the evils of the body and of fortune are dreaded; He by being born after a miraculous manner and working caused Himself to be loved; and by dying and rising

again shut out fear. And, further, in all other matters, which it were long to go through, He shewed Himself such, as that we might perceive unto what the clemency of God could be reached forth, and unto what the weakness of man be lifted up.

34. This is, believe me, a most wholesome authority, this a lifting up first of our mind from dwelling on the earth, this a turning from the love of this world unto the True God. It is authority alone which moves fools to hasten unto wisdom. So long as we cannot understand pure (truths), it is indeed wretched to be deceived by authority, but surely more wretched not to be moved. For, if the Providence of God preside not over human affairs, we have no need to busy ourselves about religion. But if both the outward form of all things, which we must believe assuredly flows from some fountain of truest beauty, and some, I know not what, inward conscience exhorts, as it were, in public and in private, all the better order of minds to seek God, and to serve God; we must not give up all hope that the same God Himself hath appointed some authority, whereon, resting as on a sure step, we may be lifted up unto God. But this, setting aside reason, which (as we have often said) it is very hard for fools to understand pure, moves us two ways; in part by miracles, in part by multitude of followers: no one of these is necessary to the wise man; who denies it? But this is now the business in hand, that we may be able to be wise, that is, to cleave to the truth; which the filthy soul is utterly unable to do: but the filth of the soul, to say shortly what I mean, is the love of any things whatsoever save God and the soul: from which filth the more any one is cleansed, the more easily he sees the truth. Therefore to wish to see the truth, in order to purge your soul, when as it is purged for the very purpose that you may see, is surely perverse and preposterous. Therefore to man unable to see the truth, authority is at hand, in order that he may be made fitted for it, and may allow himself to be cleansed; and, as I said a little above, no one doubts that this prevails, in part by miracles, in part by multitude. But I call that a miracle, whatever appears that is difficult or unusual above the hope or power of them who wonder. Of which kind there is nothing more suited for the people, and in general for foolish men, than what is brought near to the senses. But these, again, are divided into two kinds; for there are certain, which cause only wonder, but certain others procure also great favor and good-will. For, if



one were to see a man flying, inasmuch as that matter brings no advantage to the spectator, beside the spectacle itself, he only wonders. But if any affected with grievous and hopeless disease were to recover straightway, upon being bidden, his affection for him who heals, will go beyond even his wonder at his healing. Such were done at that time at which God in True Man appeared unto men, as much as was enough. The sick were healed, the lepers were cleansed; walking was restored to the lame, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf. The men of that time saw water turned into wine, five thousand filled with five loaves, seas passed on foot, dead rising again: thus certain provided for the good of the body by more open benefit, certain again for the good of the soul by more hidden sign, and all for the good of men by their witness to Majesty: thus, at that time, was the divine authority moving towards Itself the wandering souls of mortal men. Why, say you, do not those things take place now? because they would not move, unless they were wonderful, and, if they were usual, they would not be wonderful. For the interchanges of day and night, and the settled order of things in Heaven, the revolution of years divided into four parts, the fall and return of leaves to trees, the boundless power of seeds, the beauty of light, the varieties of colors, sounds, tastes, and scents, let there be some one who shall see and perceive them for the first time, and yet such an one as we may converse with; he is stupified and overwhelmed with miracles: but we condemn all these, not because they are easy to understand, (for what more obscure than the causes of these?) but surely because they constantly meet our senses. Therefore they were done at a very suitable time, in order that, by these a multitude of believers having been gathered together and spread abroad, authority might be turned with effect upon habits.

35. But any habits whatever have so great power to hold possession of men's minds, that even what in them are evil, which usually takes place through excess of lusts, we can sooner disapprove of and hate, than desert or change. Do you think that little hath been done for the benefit of man, that not some few very learned men maintain by argument, but also an unlearned crowd of males and females in so many and different nations both believe and set forth, that we are to worship as God nothing of earth, nothing of fire, nothing, lastly, which comes into contact with the senses of the body, but that we are to seek to approach Him by the understanding

only? that abstinence is extended even unto the slenderest food of bread and water, and fastings not only for the day, but also continued through several days together; that chastity is carried even unto the contempt of marriage and family; that patience even unto the setting light by crosses and flames; that liberality even unto the distribution of estates unto the poor; that, lastly, the contempt of this whole world even unto the desire of death? Few do these things, yet fewer do them well and wisely: but whole nations approve, nations hear, nations favor, nations, lastly, love. Nations accuse their own weakness that they cannot do these things, and that not without the mind being carried forward unto God, nor without certain sparks of virtue. This hath been brought to pass by the Divine Providence, through the prophecies of the Prophets, through the manhood and teaching of Christ, through the journeys of the Apostles, through the insults, crosses, blood, of the Martyrs, through the praiseworthy life of the Saints, and, in all these, according as times were seasonable, through miracles worthy of so great matters and virtues. When therefore we see so great help of God, so great progress and fruit, shall we doubt to hide ourselves in the bosom of that Church, which even unto the confession of the human race from [the] apostolic chair through successions of Bishops, (heretics in vain lurking around her and being condemned, partly by the judgment of the very people, partly by the weight of councils, partly also by the majesty of miracles,) hath held the summit of authority. To be unwilling to grant to her the first place, is either surely the height of impiety, or is headlong arrogance. For, if there be no sure way unto wisdom and health of souls, unless where faith prepare them for reason, what else is it to be ungrateful for the Divine help and aid, than to wish to resist authority furnished with so great labor? And if every system of teaching, however mean and easy, requires, in order to its being received, a teacher or master, what more full of rash pride, than, in the case of books of divine mysteries, both to be unwilling to learn from such as interpret them, and to wish to condemn them unlearned?

36. Wherefore, if either our reasoning or our discourse hath in any way moved you, and if you have, as I believe, a true care for yourself, I would you would listen to me, and with pious faith, lively hope, and simple charity, entrust yourself to good teachers of Catholic Christianity; and cease not to pray unto God Himself, by Whose goodness alone we were created,

and suffer punishment by His justice, and are set free by His mercy. Thus there will be wanting to you neither precepts and treatises of most learned and truly Christian men, nor books, nor calm thoughts themselves, whereby you may easily find what you are seeking. For do you abandon utterly those wordy and wretched men, (for what other milder name can I use?) who, whilst they seek to excess whence is evil, find nothing but evil. And on this question they often rouse their hearers to inquire; but after that they have been roused, they teach them such lessons as that it were preferable even to sleep for ever, than thus to be awake. For in place of lethargic they make them frantic, between which diseases, both being usually fatal, there is still this difference, that lethargic persons die without doing violence to others; but the frantic person many who are sound, and specially they who wish to help him, have reason to fear. For neither is God the author of evil, nor hath it ever repented Him that He hath done aught, nor is He troubled by storm of any passion of soul, nor is a small part of earth His Kingdom: He neither approves nor commands any sins or wickedness, He never lies. For these and such like used to move us, when they used them to make great and threatening assaults, and charged this as being the system of teaching of the Old Testament, which is most false. Thus then I allow that they do right in censuring these. What then have I learnt? What think you, save that, when these are censured, the Catholic system of teaching is not censured. Thus what I had learnt among them that is true, I hold, what is false that I had thought I reject. But the Catholic Church hath taught me many other things also, which those men of bloodless bodies, but coarse minds, cannot aspire unto; that is to say, that God is not corporeal, that no part of Him can be perceived by corporeal eyes, that nothing of His Substance or Nature can any way suffer violence or change, or is compounded or formed; and if you grant me these, (for we may not think otherwise concerning God,) all their devices are overthrown. But how it is, that neither God begot or created evil, nor yet is there, or hath there been ever, any nature and substance, which God either begot not or created not, and yet that He setteth us free from evil, is proved by reasons so necessary, that it cannot at all be matter of doubt; especially to you and such as you; that is, if to a good disposition there be added piety and a certain peace of mind, without which nothing at all can be understood concerning so great matters. And here there is no rumor concerning smoke, and I know not what

Persian vain fable, unto which it is enough to lend an ear, and soul not subtile, but absolutely childish. Far altogether, far otherwise is the truth, than as the Manichees dote. But since this discourse of ours hath gone much further than I thought, here let us end the book; in which I wish you to remember, that I have not yet begun to refute the Manichees, and that I have not yet assailed that nonsense; and that neither have I unfolded any thing great concerning the Catholic Church itself, but that I have only wished to root out of you, if I could, a false notion concerning true Christians that was maliciously or ignorantly suggested to us, and to arouse you to learn certain great and divine things. Wherefore let this volume be as it is; but when your soul becomes more calmed, I shall perhaps be more ready in what remains.

# ON THE TRINITY

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

DE TRINITATE, LIBRI XV.

THE FIFTEEN BOOKS OF AURELIUS AUGUSTINUS, BISHOP OF HIPPO.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. ARTHUR WEST HADDAN, B.D.

REVISED AND ANNOTATE, TOGETHER WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY, BY

THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. T. SHEDD, D.D.

# CONTENTS

## ON THE TRINITY

### Book I

#### Chapter 1

This Work is Written Against Those Who Sophistically Assail the Faith of the Trinity, Through Misuse of Reason. They Who Dispute Concerning God Err from a Threefold Cause. Holy Scripture, Removing What is False, Leads Us on by Degrees to Things Divine. What True Immortality is. We are Nourished by Faith, that We May Be Enabled to Apprehend Things Divine

#### Chapter 2

In What Manner This Work Proposes to Discourse Concerning the Trinity.

#### Chapter 3

What Augustin Requests from His Readers. The Errors of Readers Dull of Comprehension Not to Be Ascribed to the Author

#### Chapter 4

What the Doctrine of the Catholic Faith is Concerning the Trinity.

#### Chapter 5

Of Difficulties Concerning the Trinity: in What Manner Three are One God, and How, Working Indivisibly, They Yet Perform Some Things Severally.

#### Chapter 6

That the Son is Very God, of the Same Substance with the Father. Not Only the Father, But the Trinity, is Affirmed to Be Immortal. All Things are Not from the Father Alone, But Also from the Son. That the Holy Spirit is Very God, Equal with the Father and the Son

#### Chapter 7

In What Manner the Son is Less Than the Father, and Than Himself

#### Chapter 8

The Texts of Scripture Explained Respecting the Subjection of the Son to the Father, Which Have Been Misunderstood. Christ Will Not So Give Up the Kingdom to the Father, as to Take It Away from Himself. The Beholding Him is the Promised End of All Actions. The Holy Spirit is Sufficient to Our Blessedness Equally with the Father

#### Chapter 9

All are Sometimes Understood in One Person

#### Chapter 10

In What Manner Christ Shall Deliver Up the Kingdom to God, Even the Father. The Kingdom Having Been Delivered to God, Even the Father, Christ Will Not Then Make Intercession for Us

#### Chapter 11

By What Rule in the Scriptures It is Understood that the Son is Now Equal and Now Less

#### Chapter 12

In What Manner the Son is Said Not to Know the Day and the Hour Which the Father Knows. Some Things Said of Christ According to the Form of God, Other Things According to the Form of a Servant. In What Way It is of Christ to Give the Kingdom, in What Not of Christ. Christ Will Both Judge and Not Judge

#### Chapter 13

Diverse Things are Spoken Concerning the Same Christ, on Account of the Diverse Natures of the One Hypostasis [Theanthropic Person]. Why It is Said that the Father Will Not Judge, But Has Given Judgment to the Son

### Book II

#### Preface

#### Chapter 1

There is a Double Rule for Understanding the Scriptural Modes of Speech Concerning the Son of God. These Modes of Speech are of a Threefold Kind

#### Chapter 2

That Some Ways of Speaking Concerning the Son are to Be Understood According to Either Rule

#### Chapter 3

Some Things Concerning the Holy Spirit are to Be Understood According to the One Rule Only

#### Chapter 4

The Glorification of the Son by the Father Does Not Prove Inequality

#### Chapter 5

The Son and Holy Spirit are Not Therefore Less Because Sent. The Son is Sent Also by Himself. Of the Sending of the Holy Spirit

#### Chapter 6

The Creature is Not So Taken by the Holy Spirit as Flesh is by the Word

#### Chapter 7

A Doubt Raised About Divine Appearances

#### Chapter 8

The Entire Trinity Invisible

#### Chapter 9

Against Those Who Believed the Father Only to Be Immortal and Invisible. The Truth to Be Sought by Peaceful Study

Chapter 10

Whether God the Trinity Indiscriminately Appeared to the Fathers, or Any One Person of the Trinity. The Appearing of God to Adam. Of the Same Appearance. The Vision to Abraham

Chapter 11

Of the Same Appearance

Chapter 12

The Appearance to Lot is Examined

Chapter 13

The Appearance in the Bush

Chapter 14

Of the Appearance in the Pillar of Cloud and of Fire

Chapter 15

Of the Appearance on Sinai. Whether the Trinity Spake in that Appearance or Some One Person Specially

Chapter 16

In What Manner Moses Saw God

Chapter 17

How the Back Parts of God Were Seen. The Faith of the Resurrection of Christ. The Catholic Church Only is the Place from Whence the Back Parts of God are Seen. The Back Parts of God Were Seen by the Israelites. It is a Rash Opinion to Think that God the Father Only Was Never Seen by the Fathers

Chapter 18

The Vision of Daniel

Book III

Preface

Why Augustin Writes of the Trinity. What He Claims from Readers. What Has Been Said in the Previous Book

Chapter 1

What is to Be Said Thereupon

Chapter 2

The Will of God is the Higher Cause of All Corporeal Change. This is Shown by an Example

Chapter 3

Of the Same Argument

Chapter 4

God Uses All Creatures as He Will, and Makes Visible Things for the Manifestation of Himself



Chapter 5

Why Miracles are Not Usual Works

Chapter 6

Diversity Alone Makes a Miracle

Chapter 7

Great Miracles Wrought by Magic Arts

Chapter 8

God Alone Creates Those Things Which are Changed by Magic Art

Chapter 9

The Original Cause of All Things is from God

Chapter 10

In How Many Ways the Creature is to Be Taken by Way of Sign. The Eucharist

Chapter 11

The Essence of God Never Appeared in Itself. Divine Appearances to the Fathers Wrought by the Ministry of Angels. An Objection Drawn from the Mode of Speech Removed. That the Appearing of God to Abraham Himself, Just as that to Moses, Was Wrought by Angels. The Same Thing is Proved by the Law Being Given to Moses by Angels. What Has Been Said in This Book, and What Remains to Be Said in the Next

Book IV

Preface

The Knowledge of God is to Be Sought from God

Chapter 1

We are Made Perfect by Acknowledgement of Our Own Weakness. The Incarnate Word Dispels Our Darkness

Chapter 2

How We are Rendered Apt for the Perception of Truth Through the Incarnate Word

Chapter 3

The One Death and Resurrection of The Body of Christ Harmonizes with Our Double Death and Resurrection of Body and Soul, to the Effect of Salvation. In What Way the Single Death of Christ is Bestowed Upon Our Double Death

Chapter 4

The Ratio of the Single to the Double Comes from the Perfection of the Senary Number. The Perfection of The Senary Number is Commended in the Scriptures. The Year Abounds in The Senary Number

Chapter 5

The Number Six is Also Commended in the Building Up of the Body of Christ and of the Temple at Jerusalem

Chapter 6

The Three Days of the Resurrection, in Which Also the Ratio of Single to Double is Apparent

Chapter 7

In What Manner We are Gathered from Many into One Through One Mediator

Chapter 8

In What Manner Christ Wills that All Shall Be One in Himself

Chapter 9

The Same Argument Continued

Chapter 10

As Christ is the Mediator of Life, So the Devil is the Mediator of Death

Chapter 11

Miracles Which are Done by Demons are to Be Spurned

Chapter 12

The Devil the Mediator of Death, Christ of Life

Chapter 13

The Death of Christ Voluntary. How the Mediator of Life Subdued the Mediator of Death. How the Devil Leads His Own to Despise the Death of Christ

Chapter 14

Christ the Most Perfect Victim for Cleansing Our Faults. In Every Sacrifice Four Things are to Be Considered

Chapter 15

They are Proud Who Think They are Able, by Their Own Righteousness, to Be Cleansed So as to See God

Chapter 16

The Old Philosophers are Not to Be Consulted Concerning the Resurrection and Concerning Things to Come

Chapter 17

In How Many Ways Things Future are Foreknown. Neither Philosophers, Nor Those Who Were Distinguished Among the Ancients, are to Be Consulted Concerning the Resurrection of the Dead

Chapter 18

The Son of God Became Incarnate in Order that We Being Cleansed by Faith May Be Raised to the Unchangeable Truth

Chapter 19

In What Manner the Son Was Sent and Proclaimed Beforehand. How in the Sending of His Birth in the Flesh He Was Made Less Without Detriment to His Equality with the Father

Chapter 20

The Sender and the Sent Equal. Why the Son is Said to Be Sent by the Father. Of the Mission of

the Holy Spirit. How and by Whom He Was Sent. The Father the Beginning of the Whole Godhead

Chapter 21

Of the Sensible Showing of the Holy Spirit, and of the Coeternity of the Trinity. What Has Been Said, and What Remains to Be Said

Book V

Chapter 1

What the Author Entreats from God, What from the Reader. In God Nothing is to Be Thought Corporeal or Changeable

Chapter 2

God the Only Unchangeable Essence

Chapter 3

The Argument of the Arians is Refuted, Which is Drawn from the Words Begotten and Unbegotten

Chapter 4

The Accidental Always Implies Some Change in the Thing

Chapter 5

Nothing is Spoken of God According to Accident, But According to Substance or According to Relation

Chapter 6

Reply is Made to the Cavils of the Heretics in Respect to the Same Words Begotten and Unbegotten

Chapter 7

The Addition of a Negative Does Not Change the Predicament

Chapter 8

Whatever is Spoken of God According to Substance, is Spoken of Each Person Severally, and Together of the Trinity Itself. One Essence in God, and Three, in Greek, Hypostases, in Latin, Persons

Chapter 9

The Three Persons Not Properly So Called [in a Human Sense]

Chapter 10

Those Things Which Belong Absolutely to God as an Essence, are Spoken of the Trinity in the Singular, Not in the Plural

Chapter 11

What is Said Relatively in the Trinity

Chapter 12

In Relative Things that are Reciprocal, Names are Sometimes Wanting

### Chapter 13

How the Word Beginning (Principium) is Spoken Relatively in the Trinity

### Chapter 14

The Father and the Son the Only Beginning (Principium) of the Holy Spirit

### Chapter 15

Whether the Holy Spirit Was a Gift Before as Well as After He Was Given

### Chapter 16

What is Said of God in Time, is Said Relatively, Not Accidentally

## Book VI

### Chapter 1

The Son, According to the Apostle, is the Power and Wisdom of the Father. Hence the Reasoning of the Catholics Against the Earlier Arians. A Difficulty is Raised, Whether the Father is Not Wisdom Himself, But Only the Father of Wisdom

### Chapter 2

What is Said of the Father and Son Together, and What Not

### Chapter 3

That the Unity of the Essence of the Father and the Son is to Be Gathered from the Words, "We are One." The Son is Equal to the Father Both in Wisdom and in All Other Things

### Chapter 4

The Same Argument Continued

### Chapter 5

The Holy Spirit Also is Equal to the Father and the Son in All Things

### Chapter 6

How God is a Substance Both Simple and Manifold

### Chapter 7

God is a Trinity, But Not Triple (Triplex)

### Chapter 8

No Addition Can Be Made to the Nature of God

### Chapter 9

Whether One or the Three Persons Together are Called the Only God

### Chapter 10

Of the Attributes Assigned by Hilary to Each Person. The Trinity is Represented in Things that are Made

## Book VII

### Chapter 1

Augustin Returns to the Question, Whether Each Person of the Trinity by Itself is Wisdom. With

What Difficulty, or in What Way, the Proposed Question is to Be Solved

Chapter 2

The Father and the Son are Together One Wisdom, as One Essence, Although Not Together One Word

Chapter 3

Why the Son Chiefly is Intimated in the Scriptures by the Name of Wisdom, While Both the Father and the Holy Spirit are Wisdom. That the Holy Spirit, Together with the Father and the Son, is One Wisdom

Chapter 4

How It Was Brought About that the Greeks Speak of Three Hypostases, the Latins of Three Persons. Scripture Nowhere Speaks of Three Persons in One God

Chapter 5

In God, Substance is Spoken Improperly, Essence Properly

Chapter 6

Why We Do Not in the Trinity Speak of One Person, and Three Essences. What He Ought to Believe Concerning the Trinity Who Does Not Receive What is Said Above. Man is Both After the Image, and is the Image of God

Book VIII

Preface

The Conclusion of What Has Been Said Above. The Rule to Be Observed in the More Difficult Questions of the Faith

Chapter 1

It is Shown by Reason that in God Three are Not Anything Greater Than One Person

Chapter 2

Every Corporeal Conception Must Be Rejected, in Order that It May Be Understood How God is Truth

Chapter 3

How God May Be Known to Be the Chief Good. The Mind Does Not Become Good Unless by Turning to God

Chapter 4

God Must First Be Known by an Unerring Faith, that He May Be Loved

Chapter 5

How the Trinity May Be Loved Though Unknown

Chapter 6

How the Man Not Yet Righteous Can Know the Righteous Man Whom He Loves

Chapter 7

Of True Love, by Which We Arrive at the Knowledge of the Trinity. God is to Be Sought, Not

Outwardly, by Seeking to Do Wonderful Things with the Angels, But Inwardly, by Imitating the Piety of Good Angels

Chapter 8

That He Who Loves His Brother, Loves God; Because He Loves Love Itself, Which is of God, and is God

Chapter 9

Our Love of the Righteous is Kindled from Love Itself of the Unchangeable Form of Righteousness

Chapter 10

There are Three Things in Love, as It Were a Trace of the Trinity.

Book IX

Chapter 1

In What Way We Must Inquire Concerning the Trinity.

Chapter 2

The Three Things Which are Found in Love Must Be Considered

Chapter 3

The Image of the Trinity in the Mind of Man Who Knows Himself and Loves Himself. The Mind Knows Itself Through Itself

Chapter 4

The Three are One, and Also Equal, Viz The Mind Itself, and the Love, and the Knowledge of It. That the Same Three Exist Substantially, and are Predicated Relatively. That the Same Three are Inseparable. That the Same Three are Not Joined and Commingled Like Parts, But that They are of One Essence, and are Relatives

Chapter 5

That These Three are Several in Themselves, and Mutually All in All

Chapter 6

There is One Knowledge of the Thing in the Thing Itself, and Another in Eternal Truth Itself. That Corporeal Things, Too, are to Be Judged the Rules of Eternal Truth

Chapter 7

We Conceive and Beget the Word Within, from the Things We Have Beheld in the Eternal Truth. The Word, Whether of the Creature or of the Creator, is Conceived by Love

Chapter 8

In What Desire and Love Differ

Chapter 9

In the Love of Spiritual Things the Word Born is the Same as the Word Conceived. It is Otherwise in the Love of Carnal Things

Chapter 10

Whether Only Knowledge that is Loved is the Word of the Mind

Chapter 11

That the Image or Begotten Word of the Mind that Knows Itself is Equal to the Mind Itself

Chapter 12

Why Love is Not the Offspring of the Mind, as Knowledge is So. The Solution of the Question.  
The Mind with the Knowledge of Itself and the Love of Itself is the Image of the Trinity

Book X

Chapter 1

The Love of the Studious Mind, that Is, of One Desirous to Know, is Not the Love of a Thing  
Which It Does Not Know

Chapter 2

No One at All Loves Things Unknown

Chapter 3

That When the Mind Loves Itself, It is Not Unknown to Itself

Chapter 4

How the Mind Knows Itself, Not in Part, But as a Whole

Chapter 5

Why the Soul is Enjoined to Know Itself. Whence Come the Errors of the Mind Concerning Its  
Own Substance

Chapter 6

The Opinion Which the Mind Has of Itself is Deceitful

Chapter 7

The Opinions of Philosophers Respecting the Substance of the Soul. The Error of Those Who are  
of Opinion that the Soul is Corporeal, Does Not Arise from Defective Knowledge of the Soul, But  
from Their Adding There to Something Foreign to It. What is Meant by Finding

Chapter 8

How the Soul Inquires into Itself. Whence Comes the Error of the Soul Concerning Itself

Chapter 9

The Mind Knows Itself, by the Very Act of Understanding the Precept to Know Itself

Chapter 10

Every Mind Knows Certainly Three Things Concerning Itself—That It Understands, that It Is, and  
that It Lives

Chapter 11

In Memory, Understanding [or Intelligence], and Will, We Have to Note Ability, Learning, and  
Use. Memory, Understanding, and Will are One Essentially, and Three Relatively

## Chapter 12

The Mind is an Image of the Trinity in Its Own Memory, and Understanding, and Will

## Book XI

### Chapter 1

A Trace of the Trinity Also In the Outer Man

### Chapter 2

A Certain Trinity in the Sight. That There are Three Things in Sight, Which Differ in Their Own Nature. In What Manner from a Visible Thing Vision is Produced, or the Image of that Thing Which is Seen. The Matter is Shown More Clearly by an Example. How These Three Combine in One

### Chapter 3

The Unity of the Three Takes Place in Thought, Viz Of Memory, of Ternal Vision, and of Will Combining Both

### Chapter 4

How This Unity Comes to Pass

### Chapter 5

The Trinity of the Outer Man, or of External Vision, is Not an Image of God. The Likeness of God is Desired Even in Sins. In External Vision the Form of the Corporeal Thing is as It Were the Parent, Vision the Offspring; But the Will that Unites These Suggests the Holy Spirit

### Chapter 6

Of What Kind We are to Reckon the Rest (Requies), and End (Finis), of the Will in Vision

### Chapter 7

There is Another Trinity in the Memory of Him Who Thinks Over Again What He Has Seen

### Chapter 8

Different Modes of Conceiving

### Chapter 9

Species is Produced by Species in Succession

### Chapter 10

The Imagination Also Adds Even to Things We Have Not Seen, Those Things Which We Have Seen Elsewhere

### Chapter 11

Number, Weight, Measure

## Book XII

### Chapter 1

Of What Kind are the Outer and the Inner Man



## Chapter 2

Man Alone of Animate Creatures Perceives the Eternal Reasons of Things Pertaining to the Body

## Chapter 3

The Higher Reason Which Belongs to Contemplation, and the Lower Which Belongs to Action, are in One Mind

## Chapter 4

The Trinity and the Image of God is in that Part of the Mind Alone Which Belongs to the Contemplation of Eternal Things

## Chapter 5

The Opinion Which Devises an Image of the Trinity in the Marriage of Male and Female, and in Their Offspring

## Chapter 6

Why This Opinion is to Be Rejected

## Chapter 7

How Man is the Image of God. Whether the Woman is Not Also the Image of God. How the Saying of the Apostle, that the Man is the Image of God, But the Woman is the Glory of the Man, is to Be Understood Figuratively and Mystically

## Chapter 8

Turning Aside from the Image of God

## Chapter 9

The Same Argument is Continued

## Chapter 10

The Lowest Degradation Reached by Degrees

## Chapter 11

The Image of the Beast in Man

## Chapter 12

There is a Kind of Hidden Wedlock in the Inner Man. Unlawful Pleasures of the Thoughts

## Chapter 13

The Opinion of Those Who Have Thought that the Mind Was Signified by the Man, the Bodily Sense by the Woman

## Chapter 14

What is the Difference Between Wisdom and Knowledge. The Worship of God is the Love of Him. How the Intellectual Cognizance of Eternal Things Comes to Pass Through Wisdom

## Chapter 15

In Opposition to the Reminiscence of Plato and Pythagoras. Pythagoras the Samian. Of the Difference Between Wisdom and Knowledge, and of Seeking the Trinity in the Knowledge of Temporal Things

## Book XIII

### Chapter 1

The Attempt is Made to Distinguish Out of the Scriptures the Offices of Wisdom and of Knowledge. That in the Beginning of John Some Things that are Said Belong to Wisdom, Some to Knowledge. Some Things There are Only Known by the Help of Faith. How We See the Faith that is in Us. In the Same Narrative of John, Some Things are Known by the Sense of the Body, Others Only by the Reason of the Mind

### Chapter 2

Faith a Thing of the Heart, Not of the Body; How It is Common and One and the Same in All Believers. The Faith of Believers is One, No Otherwise than the Will of Those Who Will is One

### Chapter 3

Some Desires Being the Same in All, are Known to Each. The Poet Ennius

### Chapter 4

The Will to Possess Blessedness is One in All, But the Variety of Wills is Very Great Concerning that Blessedness Itself

### Chapter 5

Of the Same Thing

### Chapter 6

Why, When All Will to Be Blessed, that is Rather Chosen by Which One Withdraws from Being So

### Chapter 7

Faith is Necessary, that Man May at Some Time Be Blessed, Which He Will Only Attain in the Future Life. The Blessedness of Proud Philosophers Ridiculous and Pitable

### Chapter 8

Blessedness Cannot Exist Without Immortality

### Chapter 9

We Say that Future Blessedness is Truly Eternal, Not Through Human Reasonings, But by the Help of Faith. The Immortality of Blessedness Becomes Credible from the Incarnation of the Son of God

### Chapter 10

There Was No Other More Suitable Way of Freeing Man from the Misery of Mortality Than The Incarnation of the Word. The Merits Which are Called Ours are the Gifts of God

### Chapter 11

A Difficulty, How We are Justified in the Blood of the Son of God

### Chapter 12

All, on Account of the Sin of Adam, Were Delivered into the Power of the Devil

### Chapter 13

Man Was to Be Rescued from the Power of the Devil, Not by Power, But by Righteousness

#### Chapter 14

The Unobligated Death of Christ Has Freed Those Who Were Liable to Death

#### Chapter 15

Of the Same Subject

#### Chapter 16

The Remains of Death and the Evil Things of the World Turn to Good for the Elect. How Fitly the Death of Christ Was Chosen, that We Might Be Justified in His Blood. What the Anger of God is

#### Chapter 17

Other Advantages of the Incarnation

#### Chapter 18

Why the Son of God Took Man Upon Himself from the Race of Adam, and from a Virgin

#### Chapter 19

What in the Incarnate Word Belongs to Knowledge, What to Wisdom

#### Chapter 20

What Has Been Treated of in This Book. How We Have Reached by Steps to a Certain Trinity, Which is Found in Practical Knowledge and True Faith

### Book XIV

#### Chapter 1

What the Wisdom is of Which We are Here to Treat. Whence the Name of Philosopher Arose. What Has Been Already Said Concerning the Distinction of Knowledge and Wisdom

#### Chapter 2

There is a Kind of Trinity in the Holding, Contemplating, and Loving of Faith Temporal, But One that Does Not Yet Attain to Being Properly an Image of God

#### Chapter 3

A Difficulty Removed, Which Lies in the Way of What Has Just Been Said

#### Chapter 4

The Image of God is to Be Sought in the Immortality of the Rational Soul. How a Trinity is Demonstrated in the Mind

#### Chapter 5

Whether the Mind of Infants Knows Itself

#### Chapter 6

How a Kind of Trinity Exists in the Mind Thinking of Itself. What is the Part of Thought in This Trinity

#### Chapter 7

The Thing is Made Plain by an Example. In What Way the Matter is Handled in Order to Help the Reader

Chapter 8

The Trinity Which is the Image of God is Now to Be Sought in the Noblest Part of the Mind

Chapter 9

Whether Justice and the Other Virtues Cease to Exist in the Future Life

Chapter 10

How a Trinity is Produced by the Mind Remembering, Understanding, and Loving Itself

Chapter 11

Whether Memory is Also of Things Present

Chapter 12

The Trinity in the Mind is the Image of God, in that It Remembers, Understands, and Loves God, Which to Do is Wisdom

Chapter 13

How Any One Can Forget and Remember God

Chapter 14

The Mind Loves God in Rightly Loving Itself; And If It Love Not God, It Must Be Said to Hate Itself. Even a Weak and Erring Mind is Always Strong in Remembering, Understanding, and Loving Itself. Let It Be Turned to God, that It May Be Blessed by Remembering, Understanding, and Loving Him

Chapter 15

Although the Soul Hopes for Blessedness, Yet It Does Not Remember Lost Blessedness, But Remembers God and the Rules of Righteousness. The Unchangeable Rules of Right Living are Known Even to the Ungodly.

Chapter 16

How the Image of God is Formed Anew in Man

Chapter 17

How the Image of God in the Mind is Renewed Until the Likeness of God is Perfected in It in Blessedness

Chapter 18

Whether the Sentence of John is to Be Understood of Our Future Likeness with the Son of God in the Immortality Itself Also of the Body.

Chapter 19

John is Rather to Be Understood of Our Perfect Likeness with the Trinity in Life Eternal. Wisdom is Perfected in Happiness

Book XV

Chapter 1

God is Above the Mind

## Chapter 2

God, Although Incomprehensible, is Ever to Be Sought. The Traces of the Trinity are Not Vainly Sought in the Creature

## Chapter 3

A Brief Recapitulation of All the Previous Books

## Chapter 4

What Universal Nature Teaches Us Concerning God

## Chapter 5

How Difficult It is to Demonstrate the Trinity by Natural Reason

## Chapter 6

How There is a Trinity in the Very Simplicity of God. Whether and How the Trinity that is God is Manifested from the Trinities Which Have Been Shown to Be in Men

## Chapter 7

That It is Not Easy to Discover the Trinity that is God from the Trinities We Have Spoken of

## Chapter 8

How the Apostle Says that God is Now Seen by Us Through a Glass

## Chapter 9

Of the Term "Enigma," And of Tropical Modes of Speech

## Chapter 10

Concerning the Word of the Mind, in Which We See the Word of God, as in a Glass and an Enigma

## Chapter 11

The Likeness of the Divine Word, Such as It Is, is to Be Sought, Not in Our Own Outer and Sensible Word, But in the Inner and Mental One. There is the Greatest Possible Unlikeness Between Our Word and Knowledge and the Divine Word and Knowledge

## Chapter 12

The Academic Philosophy

## Chapter 13

Still Further of the Difference Between the Knowledge and Word of Our Mind, and the Knowledge and Word of God

## Chapter 14

The Word of God is in All Things Equal to the Father, from Whom It is

## Chapter 15

How Great is the Unlikeness Between Our Word and the Divine Word. Our Word Cannot Be or Be Called Eternal

## Chapter 16

Our Word is Never to Be Equalled to the Divine Word, Not Even When We Shall Be Like God

Chapter 17

How the Holy Spirit is Called Love, and Whether He Alone is So Called. That the Holy Spirit is in the Scriptures Properly Called by the Name of Love

Chapter 18

No Gift of God is More Excellent Than Love

Chapter 19

The Holy Spirit is Called the Gift of God in the Scriptures. By the Gift of the Holy Spirit is Meant the Gift Which is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Specially Called Love, Although Not Only the Holy Spirit in the Trinity is Love

Chapter 20

Against Eunomius, Saying that the Son of God is the Son, Not of His Nature, But of His Will. Epilogue to What Has Been Said Already

Chapter 21

Of the Likeness of the Father and of the Son Alleged to Be in Our Memory and Understanding. Of the Likeness of the Holy Spirit in Our Will or Love

Chapter 22

How Great the Unlikeness is Between the Image of the Trinity Which We Have Found in Ourselves, and the Trinity Itself

Chapter 23

Augustin Dwells Still Further on the Disparity Between the Trinity Which is in Man, and the Trinity Which is God. The Trinity is Now Seen Through a Glass by the Help of Faith, that It May Hereafter Be More Clearly Seen in the Promised Sight Face to Face

Chapter 24

The Infirmary of the Human Mind

Chapter 25

The Question Why the Holy Spirit is Not Begotten, and How He Proceeds from the Father and the Son, Will Only Be Understood When We are in Bliss

Chapter 26

The Holy Spirit Twice Given by Christ. The Procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and from the Son is Apart from Time, Nor Can He Be Called the Son of Both

Chapter 27

What It is that Suffices Here to Solve the Question Why the Spirit is Not Said to Be Begotten, and Why the Father Alone is Unbegotten. What They Ought to Do Who Do Not Understand These Things

Chapter 28

The Conclusion of the Book with a Prayer, and an Apology for Multitude of Words

# Book I

In which the unity and equality of the supreme Trinity is established from the sacred Scriptures, and some texts alleged against the equality of the Son are explained.

## CHAPTER 1

THIS WORK IS WRITTEN AGAINST THOSE WHO SOPHISTICALLY ASSAIL THE FAITH OF THE TRINITY, THROUGH MISUSE OF REASON. THEY WHO DISPUTE CONCERNING GOD ERR FROM A THREEFOLD CAUSE. HOLY SCRIPTURE, REMOVING WHAT IS FALSE, LEADS US ON BY DEGREES TO THINGS DIVINE. WHAT TRUE IMMORTALITY IS. WE ARE NOURISHED BY FAITH, THAT WE MAY BE ENABLED TO APPREHEND THINGS DIVINE

1. The following dissertation concerning the Trinity, as the reader ought to be informed, has been written in order to guard against the sophistries of those who disdain to begin with faith, and are deceived by a crude and perverse love of reason. Now one class of such men endeavor to transfer to things incorporeal and spiritual the ideas they have formed, whether through experience of the bodily senses, or by natural human wit and diligent quickness, or by the aid of art, from things corporeal; so as to seek to measure and conceive of the former by the latter. Others, again, frame whatever sentiments they may have concerning God according to the nature or affections of the human mind; and through this error they govern their discourse, in disputing concerning God, by distorted and fallacious rules. While yet a third class strive indeed to transcend the whole creation, which doubtless is changeable, in order to raise their thought to the unchangeable substance, which is God; but being weighed down by the burden of mortality, whilst they both would seem to know what they do not, and cannot know what they would, preclude themselves from entering the very path of understanding, by an over-bold affirmation of their own presumptuous judgments; choosing rather not to correct their own opinion

when it is perverse, than to change that which they have once defended. And, indeed, this is the common disease of all the three classes which I have mentioned,—viz., both of those who frame their thoughts of God according to things corporeal, and of those who do so according to the spiritual creature, such as is the soul; and of those who neither regard the body nor the spiritual creature, and yet think falsely about God; and are indeed so much the further from the truth, that nothing can be found answering to their conceptions, either in the body, or in the made or created spirit, or in the Creator Himself. For he who thinks, for instance, that God is white or red, is in error; and yet these things are found in the body. Again, he who thinks of God as now forgetting and now remembering, or anything of the same kind, is none the less in error; and yet these things are found in the mind. But he who thinks that God is of such power as to have generated Himself, is so much the more in error, because not only does God not so exist, but neither does the spiritual nor the bodily creature; for there is nothing whatever that generates its own existence.

2. In order, therefore, that the human mind might be purged from falsities of this kind, Holy Scripture, which suits itself to babes has not avoided words drawn from any class of things really existing, through which, as by nourishment, our understanding might rise gradually to things divine and transcendent. For, in speaking of God, it has both used words taken from things corporeal, as when it says, “Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings;” and it has borrowed many things from the spiritual creature, whereby to signify that which indeed is not so, but must needs so be said: as, for instance, “I the Lord thy God am a jealous God;” and, “It repenteth me that I have made man.” But it has drawn no words whatever, whereby to frame either figures of speech or enigmatic sayings, from things which do not exist at all. And hence it is that they who are shut out from the truth by that third kind of error are more mischievously and emptily vain than their fellows; in that they surmise respecting God, what can neither be found in Himself nor in any creature. For divine Scripture is wont to frame, as it were, allurements for children from the things which are found in the creature; whereby, according to their measure, and as it were by steps, the affections of the weak may be moved to seek those things that are above, and to leave those things that are below. But the same Scripture rarely



employs those things which are spoken properly of God, and are not found in any creature; as, for instance, that which was said to Moses, “I am that I am;” and, “I Am hath sent me to you.” For since both body and soul also are said in some sense to be, Holy Scripture certainly would not so express itself unless it meant to be understood in some special sense of the term. So, too, that which the Apostle says, “Who only hath immortality.” Since the soul also both is said to be, and is, in a certain manner immortal, Scripture would not say “only hath,” unless because true immortality is unchangeableness; which no creature can possess, since it belongs to the creator alone. So also James says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” So also David, “Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same.”

3. Further, it is difficult to contemplate and fully know the substance of God; who fashions things changeable, yet without any change in Himself, and creates things temporal, yet without any temporal movement in Himself. And it is necessary, therefore, to purge our minds, in order to be able to see ineffably that which is ineffable; whereto not having yet attained, we are to be nourished by faith, and led by such ways as are more suited to our capacity, that we may be rendered apt and able to comprehend it. And hence the Apostle says, that “in Christ indeed are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;” and yet has commended Him to us, as to babes in Christ, who, although already born again by His grace, yet are still carnal and psychical, not by that divine virtue wherein He is equal to the Father, but by that human infirmity whereby He was crucified. For he says, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified;” and then he continues, “And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.” And a little after he says to them, “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.” There are some who are angry at language of this kind, and think it is used in slight to themselves, and for the most part prefer rather to believe that they who so speak to them have nothing to say, than that they themselves cannot understand what they have said. And sometimes, indeed, we do allege to

them, not certainly that account of the case which they seek in their inquiries about God,—because neither can they themselves receive it, nor can we perhaps either apprehend or express it,—but such an account of it as to demonstrate to them how incapable and utterly unfit they are to understand that which they require of us. But they, on their parts, because they do not hear what they desire, think that we are either playing them false in order to conceal our own ignorance, or speaking in malice because we grudge them knowledge; and so go away indignant and perturbed.

## CHAPTER 2

### IN WHAT MANNER THIS WORK PROPOSES TO DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE TRINITY

4. Wherefore, our Lord God helping, we will undertake to render, as far as we are able, that very account which they so importunately demand: viz., that the Trinity is the one and only and true God, and also how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are rightly said, believed, understood, to be of one and the same substance or essence; in such wise that they may not fancy themselves mocked by excuses on our part, but may find by actual trial, both that the highest good is that which is discerned by the most purified minds, and that for this reason it cannot be discerned or understood by themselves, because the eye of the human mind, being weak, is dazzled in that so transcendent light, unless it be invigorated by the nourishment of the righteousness of faith. First, however, we must demonstrate, according to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, whether the faith be so. Then, if God be willing and aid us, we may perhaps at least so far serve these talkative arguers—more puffed up than capable, and therefore laboring under the more dangerous disease—as to enable them to find something which they are not able to doubt, that so, in that case where they cannot find the like, they may be led to lay the fault to their own minds, rather than to the truth itself or to our reasonings; and thus, if there be anything in them of either love or fear towards God, they may return and begin from faith in due order: perceiving at length how healthful a medicine has been provided for the faithful in the holy Church, whereby a heedful piety, healing the feebleness of the mind, may render it able to perceive the unchangeable truth, and hinder it from falling headlong, through disorderly rashness, into

pestilent and false opinion. Neither will I myself shrink from inquiry, if I am anywhere in doubt; nor be ashamed to learn, if I am anywhere in error.

### CHAPTER 3

WHAT AUGUSTIN REQUESTS FROM HIS READERS. THE ERRORS OF READERS DULL OF COMPREHENSION NOT TO BE ASCRIBED TO THE AUTHOR

5. Further let me ask of my reader, wherever, alike with myself, he is certain, there to go on with me; wherever, alike with myself, he hesitates, there to join with me in inquiring; wherever he recognizes himself to be in error, there to return to me; wherever he recognizes me to be so, there to call me back: so that we may enter together upon the path of charity, and advance towards Him of whom it is said, "Seek His face evermore." And I would make this pious and safe agreement, in the presence of our Lord God, with all who read my writings, as well in all other cases as, above all, in the case of those which inquire into the unity of the Trinity, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; because in no other subject is error more dangerous, or inquiry more laborious, or the discovery of truth more profitable. If, then, any reader shall say, This is not well said, because I do not understand it; such an one finds fault with my language, not with my faith: and it might perhaps in very truth have been put more clearly; yet no man ever so spoke as to be understood in all things by all men. Let him, therefore, who finds this fault with my discourse, see whether he can understand other men who have handled similar subjects and questions, when he does not understand me: and if he can, let him put down my book, or even, if he pleases, throw it away; and let him spend labor and time rather on those whom he understands. Yet let him not think on that account that I ought to have been silent, because I have not been able to express myself so smoothly and clearly to him as those do whom he understands. For neither do all things, which all men have written, come into the hands of all. And possibly some, who are capable of understanding even these our writings, may not find those more lucid works, and may meet with ours only. And therefore it is useful that many persons should write many books, differing in style but not in faith, concerning even the same questions, that the matter itself may reach the greatest number—some in one way, some in another. But if he who complains that he has not understood these things

has never been able to comprehend any careful and exact reasonings at all upon such subjects, let him in that case deal with himself by resolution and study, that he may know better; not with me by quarrellings and wranglings, that I may hold my peace. Let him, again, who says, when he reads my book, Certainly I understand what is said, but it is not true, assert, if he pleases, his own opinion, and refute mine if he is able. And if he do this with charity and truth, and take the pains to make it known to me (if I am still alive), I shall then receive the most abundant fruit of this my labor. And if he cannot inform myself, most willing and glad should I be that he should inform those whom he can. Yet, for my part, “I meditate in the law of the Lord,” if not “day and night,” at least such short times as I can; and I commit my meditations to writing, lest they should escape me through forgetfulness; hoping by the mercy of God that He will make me hold steadfastly all truths of which I feel certain; “but if in anything I be otherwise minded, that He will himself reveal even this to me,” whether through secret inspiration and admonition, or through His own plain utterances, or through the reasonings of my brethren. This I pray for, and this my trust and desire I commit to Him, who is sufficiently able to keep those things which He has given me, and to render those which He has promised.

6. I expect, indeed, that some, who are more dull of understanding, will imagine that in some parts of my books I have held sentiments which I have not held, or have not held those which I have. But their error, as none can be ignorant, ought not to be attributed to me, if they have deviated into false doctrine through following my steps without apprehending me, whilst I am compelled to pick my way through a hard and obscure subject: seeing that neither can any one, in any way, rightly ascribe the numerous and various errors of heretics to the holy testimonies themselves of the divine books; although all of them endeavor to defend out of those same Scriptures their own false and erroneous opinions. The law of Christ, that is, charity, admonishes me clearly, and commands me with a sweet constraint, that when men think that I have held in my books something false which I have not held, and that same falsehood displeases one and pleases another, I should prefer to be blamed by him who reprehends the falsehood, rather than praised by him who praises it. For although I, who never held the error,

am not rightly blamed by the former, yet the error itself is rightly censured; whilst by the latter neither am I rightly praised, who am thought to have held that which the truth censures, nor the sentiment itself, which the truth also censures. Let us therefore essay the work which we have undertaken in the name of the Lord.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### WHAT THE DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH IS CONCERNING THE TRINITY

7. All those Catholic expounders of the divine Scriptures, both Old and New, whom I have been able to read, who have written before me concerning the Trinity, Who is God, have purposed to teach, according to the Scriptures, this doctrine, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit intimate a divine unity of one and the same substance in an indivisible equality; and therefore that they are not three Gods, but one God: although the Father hath begotten the Son, and so He who is the Father is not the Son; and the Son is begotten by the Father, and so He who is the Son is not the Father; and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but only the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, Himself also co-equal with the Father and the Son, and pertaining to the unity of the Trinity. Yet not that this Trinity was born of the Virgin Mary, and crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven, but only the Son. Nor, again, that this Trinity descended in the form of a dove upon Jesus when He was baptized; nor that, on the day of Pentecost, after the ascension of the Lord, when “there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind,” the same Trinity “sat upon each of them with cloven tongues like as of fire,” but only the Holy Spirit. Nor yet that this Trinity said from heaven, “Thou art my Son,” whether when He was baptized by John, or when the three disciples were with Him in the mount, or when the voice sounded, saying, “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again;” but that it was a word of the Father only, spoken to the Son; although the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as they are indivisible, so work indivisibly. This is also my faith, since it is the Catholic faith.

## CHAPTER 5

OF DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING THE TRINITY: IN WHAT MANNER THREE ARE ONE GOD, AND HOW, WORKING INDIVISIBLY, THEY YET PERFORM SOME THINGS SEVERALLY

8. Some persons, however, find a difficulty in this faith; when they hear that the Father is God, and the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God, and yet that this Trinity is not three Gods, but one God; and they ask how they are to understand this: especially when it is said that the Trinity works indivisibly in everything that God works, and yet that a certain voice of the Father spoke, which is not the voice of the Son; and that none except the Son was born in the flesh, and suffered, and rose again, and ascended into heaven; and that none except the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove. They wish to understand how the Trinity uttered that voice which was only of the Father; and how the same Trinity created that flesh in which the Son only was born of the Virgin; and how the very same Trinity itself wrought that form of a dove, in which the Holy Spirit only appeared. Yet, otherwise, the Trinity does not work indivisibly, but the Father does some things, the Son other things, and the Holy Spirit yet others: or else, if they do some things together, some severally, then the Trinity is not indivisible. It is a difficulty, too, to them, in what manner the Holy Spirit is in the Trinity, whom neither the Father nor the Son, nor both, have begotten, although He is the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. Since, then, men weary us with asking such questions, let us unfold to them, as we are able, whatever wisdom God's gift has bestowed upon our weakness on this subject; neither "let us go on our way with consuming envy." Should we say that we are not accustomed to think about such things, it would not be true; yet if we acknowledge that such subjects commonly dwell in our thoughts, carried away as we are by the love of investigating the truth, then they require of us, by the law of charity, to make known to them what we have herein been able to find out. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect" (for, if the Apostle Paul, how much more must I, who lie far beneath his feet, count myself not to have apprehended!); but, according to my measure, "if I forget those things that are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before, and press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling," I am requested to disclose so much of the road as I have

already passed, and the point to which I have reached, whence the course yet remains to bring me to the end. And those make the request, whom a generous charity compels me to serve. Needs must too, and God will grant that, in supplying them with matter to read, I shall profit myself also; and that, in seeking to reply to their inquiries, I shall myself likewise find that for which I was inquiring. Accordingly I have undertaken the task, by the bidding and help of the Lord my God, not so much of discoursing with authority respecting things I know already, as of learning those things by piously discoursing of them.

## CHAPTER 6

THAT THE SON IS VERY GOD, OF THE SAME SUBSTANCE WITH THE FATHER. NOT ONLY THE FATHER, BUT THE TRINITY, IS AFFIRMED TO BE IMMORTAL. ALL THINGS ARE NOT FROM THE FATHER ALONE, BUT ALSO FROM THE SON. THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS VERY GOD, EQUAL WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON

9. They who have said that our Lord Jesus Christ is not God, or not very God, or not with the Father the One and only God, or not truly immortal because changeable, are proved wrong by the most plain and unanimous voice of divine testimonies; as, for instance, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” For it is plain that we are to take the Word of God to be the only Son of God, of whom it is afterwards said, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” on account of that birth of His incarnation, which was wrought in time of the Virgin. But herein is declared, not only that He is God, but also that He is of the same substance with the Father; because, after saying, “And the Word was God,” it is said also, “The same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made.” Not simply “all things;” but only all things that were made, that is; the whole creature. From which it appears clearly, that He Himself was not made, by whom all things were made. And if He was not made, then He is not a creature; but if He is not a creature, then He is of the same substance with the Father. For all substance that is not God is creature; and all that is not creature is God. And if the Son is not of the same substance with the Father, then He is a substance that was made: and if He is a substance that was made, then all things were not made by Him; but “all things were made by

Him,” therefore He is of one and the same substance with the Father. And so He is not only God, but also very God. And the same John most expressly affirms this in his epistle: “For we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know the true God, and that we may be in His true Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”

10. Hence also it follows by consequence, that the Apostle Paul did not say, “Who alone has immortality,” of the Father merely; but of the One and only God, which is the Trinity itself. For that which is itself eternal life is not mortal according to any changeableness; and hence the Son of God, because “He is Eternal Life,” is also Himself understood with the Father, where it is said, “Who only hath immortality.” For we, too, are made partakers of this eternal life, and become, in our own measure, immortal. But the eternal life itself, of which we are made partakers, is one thing; we ourselves, who, by partaking of it, shall live eternally, are another. For if He had said, “Whom in His own time the Father will show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality;” not even so would it be necessarily understood that the Son is excluded. For neither has the Son separated the Father from Himself, because He Himself, speaking elsewhere with the voice of wisdom (for He Himself is the Wisdom of God), says, “I alone compassed the circuit of heaven.” And therefore so much the more is it not necessary that the words, “Who hath immortality,” should be understood of the Father alone, omitting the Son; when they are said thus: “That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: whom in His own time He will show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.” In which words neither is the Father specially named, nor the Son, nor the Holy Spirit; but the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; that is, the One and only and true God, the Trinity itself.

11. But perhaps what follows may interfere with this meaning; because it is said, “Whom no man hath seen, nor can see:” although this may also be



taken as belonging to Christ according to His divinity, which the Jews did not see, who yet saw and crucified Him in the flesh; whereas His divinity can in no wise be seen by human sight, but is seen with that sight with which they who see are no longer men, but beyond men. Rightly, therefore, is God Himself, the Trinity, understood to be the “blessed and only Potentate,” who “shows the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His own time.” For the words, “Who only hath immortality,” are said in the same way as it is said, “Who only doeth wondrous things.” And I should be glad to know of whom they take these words to be said. If only of the Father, how then is that true which the Son Himself says, “For what things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise?” Is there any, among wonderful works, more wonderful than to raise up and quicken the dead? Yet the same Son saith, “As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.” How, then, does the Father alone “do wondrous things,” when these words allow us to understand neither the Father only, nor the Son only, but assuredly the one only true God, that is, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit?

12. Also, when the same apostle says, “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him,” who can doubt that he speaks of all things which are created; as does John, when he says, “All things were made by Him”? I ask, therefore, of whom he speaks in another place: “For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.” For if of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, so as to assign each clause severally to each person: of Him, that is to say, of the Father; through Him, that is to say, through the Son; in Him, that is to say, in the Holy Spirit,—it is manifest that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one God, inasmuch as the words continue in the singular number, “To whom be glory for ever.” For at the beginning of the passage he does not say, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge” of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit, but “of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” “How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and in Him,

are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.” But if they will have this to be understood only of the Father, then in what way are all things by the Father, as is said here; and all things by the Son, as where it is said to the Corinthians, “And one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things,” and as in the Gospel of John, “All things were made by Him?” For if some things were made by the Father, and some by the Son, then all things were not made by the Father, nor all things by the Son; but if all things were made by the Father, and all things by the Son, then the same things were made by the Father and by the Son. The Son, therefore, is equal with the Father, and the working of the Father and the Son is indivisible. Because if the Father made even the Son, whom certainly the Son Himself did not make, then all things were not made by the Son; but all things were made by the Son: therefore He Himself was not made, that with the Father He might make all things that were made. And the apostle has not refrained from using the very word itself, but has said most expressly, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;” using here the name of God specially of the Father; as elsewhere, “But the head of Christ is God.”

13. Similar evidence has been collected also concerning the Holy Spirit, of which those who have discussed the subject before ourselves have most fully availed themselves, that He too is God, and not a creature. But if not a creature, then not only God (for men likewise are called gods ), but also very God; and therefore absolutely equal with the Father and the Son, and in the unity of the Trinity consubstantial and co-eternal. But that the Holy Spirit is not a creature is made quite plain by that passage above all others, where we are commanded not to serve the creature, but the Creator; not in the sense in which we are commanded to “serve” one another by love, which is in Greek *doouleuein*, but in that in which God alone is served, which is in Greek *latreuein*. From whence they are called idolaters who tender that service to images which is due to God. For it is this service concerning which it is said, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” For this is found also more distinctly in the Greek Scriptures, which have *latreuseis*. Now if we are forbidden to serve the creature with such a service, seeing that it is written, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve” (and hence, too, the apostle repudiates those who worship and serve the creature more than the

Creator), then assuredly the Holy Spirit is not a creature, to whom such a service is paid by all the saints; as says the apostle, “For we are the circumcision, which serve the Spirit of God,” which is in the Greek *latreuontes*. For even most Latin copies also have it thus, “We who serve the Spirit of God;” but all Greek ones, or almost all, have it so. Although in some Latin copies we find, not “We worship the Spirit of God,” but, “We worship God in the Spirit.” But let those who err in this case, and refuse to give up to the more weighty authority, tell us whether they find this text also varied in the mss.: “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?” Yet what can be more senseless or more profane, than that any one should dare to say that the members of Christ are the temple of one who, in their opinion, is a creature inferior to Christ? For the apostle says in another place, “Your bodies are members of Christ.” But if the members of Christ are also the temple of the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit is not a creature; because we must needs owe to Him, of whom our body is the temple, that service wherewith God only is to be served, which in Greek is called *latreia*. And accordingly the apostle says, “Therefore glorify God in your body.”

## CHAPTER 7

### IN WHAT MANNER THE SON IS LESS THAN THE FATHER, AND THAN HIMSELF

14. In these and like testimonies of the divine Scriptures, by free use of which, as I have said, our predecessors exploded such sophistries or errors of the heretics, the unity and equality of the Trinity are intimated to our faith. But because, on account of the incarnation of the Word of God for the working out of our salvation, that the man Christ Jesus might be the Mediator between God and men, many things are so said in the sacred books as to signify, or even most expressly declare, the Father to be greater than the Son; men have erred through a want of careful examination or consideration of the whole tenor of the Scriptures, and have endeavored to transfer those things which are said of Jesus Christ according to the flesh, to that substance of His which was eternal before the incarnation, and is eternal. They say, for instance, that the Son is less than the Father, because it is written that the Lord Himself said, “My Father is greater than I.” But the truth shows that after the same sense the Son is less also than Himself;

for how was He not made less also than Himself, who “emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant?” For He did not so take the form of a servant as that He should lose the form of God, in which He was equal to the Father. If, then, the form of a servant was so taken that the form of God was not lost, since both in the form of a servant and in the form of God He Himself is the same only-begotten Son of God the Father, in the form of God equal to the Father, in the form of a servant the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; is there any one who cannot perceive that He Himself in the form of God is also greater than Himself, but yet likewise in the form of a servant less than Himself? And not, therefore, without cause the Scripture says both the one and the other, both that the Son is equal to the Father, and that the Father is greater than the Son. For there is no confusion when the former is understood as on account of the form of God, and the latter as on account of the form of a servant. And, in truth, this rule for clearing the question through all the sacred Scriptures is set forth in one chapter of an epistle of the Apostle Paul, where this distinction is commended to us plainly enough. For he says, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and was found in fashion as a man.” The Son of God, then, is equal to God the Father in nature, but less in “fashion.” For in the form of a servant which He took He is less than the Father; but in the form of God, in which also He was before He took the form of a servant, He is equal to the Father. In the form of God He is the Word, “by whom all things are made;” but in the form of a servant He was “made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” In like manner, in the form of God He made man; in the form of a servant He was made man. For if the Father alone had made man without the Son, it would not have been written, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” Therefore, because the form of God took the form of a servant, both is God and both is man; but both God, on account of God who takes; and both man, on account of man who is taken. For neither by that taking is the one of them turned and changed into the other: the Divinity is not changed into the creature, so as to cease to be Divinity; nor the creature into Divinity, so as to cease to be creature.

## CHAPTER 8

THE TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE EXPLAINED RESPECTING THE SUBJECTION OF THE SON TO THE FATHER, WHICH HAVE BEEN MISUNDERSTOOD. CHRIST WILL NOT SO GIVE UP THE KINGDOM TO THE FATHER, AS TO TAKE IT AWAY FROM HIMSELF. THE BEHOLDING HIM IS THE PROMISED END OF ALL ACTIONS. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SUFFICIENT TO OUR BLESSEDNESS EQUALLY WITH THE FATHER

15. As for that which the apostle says, “And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him:” either the text has been so turned, lest any one should think that the “fashion” of Christ, which He took according to the human creature, was to be transformed hereafter into the Divinity, or (to express it more precisely) the Godhead itself, who is not a creature, but is the unity of the Trinity,—a nature incorporeal, and unchangeable, and consubstantial, and co-eternal with itself; or if any one contends, as some have thought, that the text, “Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him,” is so turned in order that one may believe that very “subjection” to be a change and conversion hereafter of the creature into the substance or essence itself of the Creator, that is, that that which had been the substance of a creature shall become the substance of the Creator;—such an one at any rate admits this, of which in truth there is no possible doubt, that this had not yet taken place, when the Lord said, “My Father is greater than I.” For He said this not only before He ascended into heaven, but also before He had suffered, and had risen from the dead. But they who think that the human nature in Him is to be changed and converted into the substance of the Godhead, and that it was so said, “Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him,”—as if to say, Then also the Son of man Himself, and the human nature taken by the Word of God, shall be changed into the nature of Him who put all things under Him,—must also think that this will then take place, when, after the day of judgment, “He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.” And hence even still, according to this opinion, the Father is greater than that form of a servant which was taken of the Virgin. But if some affirm even further, that the man Christ Jesus has already been changed into the substance of God, at least they cannot deny that the human nature still remained, when He said before His passion, “For my Father is greater than I;” whence there is no question that it was said in

this sense, that the Father is greater than the form of a servant, to whom in the form of God the Son is equal. Nor let any one, hearing what the apostle says, “But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under Him,” think the words, that He hath put all things under the Son, to be so understood of the Father, as that He should not think that the Son Himself put all things under Himself. For this the apostle plainly declares, when he says to the Philippians, “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.” For the working of the Father and of the Son is indivisible. Otherwise, neither hath the Father Himself put all things under Himself, but the Son hath put all things under Him, who delivers the kingdom to Him, and puts down all rule and all authority and power. For these words are spoken of the Son: “When He shall have delivered up,” says the apostle, “the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and all power.” For the same that puts down, also makes subject.

16. Neither may we think that Christ shall so give up the kingdom to God, even the Father, as that He shall take it away from Himself. For some vain talkers have thought even this. For when it is said, “He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” He Himself is not excluded; because He is one God together with the Father. But that word “until” deceives those who are careless readers of the divine Scriptures, but eager for controversies. For the text continues, “For He must reign, until He hath put all enemies under His feet;” as though, when He had so put them, He would no more reign. Neither do they perceive that this is said in the same way as that other text, “His heart is established: He shall not be afraid, until He see His desire upon His enemies.” For He will not then be afraid when He has seen it. What then means, “When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” as though God and the Father has not the kingdom now? But because He is hereafter to bring all the just, over whom now, living by faith, the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, reigns, to that sight which the same apostle calls “face to face;” therefore the words, “When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to

God, even the Father,” are as much as to say, When He shall have brought believers to the contemplation of God, even the Father. For He says, “All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” The Father will then be revealed by the Son, “when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and all power;” that is, in such wise that there shall be no more need of any economy of similitudes, by means of angelic rulers, and authorities, and powers. Of whom that is not unfitly understood, which is said in the Song of Songs to the bride, “We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver, while the King sitteth at His table;” that is, as long as Christ is in His secret place: since “your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” Before which time, “we see now through a glass, in an enigma,” that is, in similitudes, “but then face to face.”

17. For this contemplation is held forth to us as the end of all actions, and the everlasting fullness of joy. For “we are the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” For that which He said to His servant Moses, “I am that I am; thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me to you;” this it is which we shall contemplate when we shall live in eternity. For so it is said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” This shall be when the Lord shall have come, and “shall have brought to light the hidden things of darkness;” when the darkness of this present mortality and corruption shall have passed away. Then will be our morning, which is spoken of in the Psalm, “In the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will contemplate Thee.” Of this contemplation I understand it to be said, “When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;” that is, when He shall have brought the just, over whom now, living by faith, the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, reigns, to the contemplation of God, even the Father. If herein I am foolish, let him who knows better correct me; to me at least the case seems as I have said. For we shall not seek anything else, when we shall have come to the contemplation of Him. But that contemplation is not yet,

so long as our joy is in hope. For “hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it,” viz. “as long as the King sitteth at His table.” Then will take place that which is written, “In Thy presence is fullness of joy.” Nothing more than that joy will be required; because there will be nothing more than can be required. For the Father will be manifested to us, and that will suffice for us. And this much Philip had well understood, so that he said to the Lord, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” But he had not yet understood that he himself was able to say this very same thing in this way also: Lord, show Thyself to us, and it sufficeth us. For, that he might understand this, the Lord replied to him, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” But because He intended him, before he could see this, to live by faith, He went on to say, “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?” For “while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight.” For contemplation is the recompense of faith, for which recompense our hearts are purified by faith; as it is written, “Purifying their hearts by faith.” And that our hearts are to be purified for this contemplation, is proved above all by this text, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” And that this is life eternal, God says in the Psalm, “With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.” Whether, therefore, we hear, Show us the Son; or whether we hear, Show us the Father; it is even all one, since neither can be manifested without the other. For they are one, as He also Himself says, “My Father and I are one.” Finally, on account of this very indivisibility, it suffices that sometimes the Father alone, or the Son alone, should be named, as hereafter to fill us with the joy of His countenance.

18. Neither is the Spirit of either thence excluded, that is, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son; which Holy Spirit is specially called “the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.” For to have the fruition of God the Trinity, after whose image we are made, is indeed the fullness of our joy, than which there is no greater. On this account the Holy Spirit is sometimes spoken of as if He alone sufficed to our blessedness: and He does alone so suffice, because He cannot be divided from the Father and the Son; as the Father alone is sufficient, because He cannot be divided from the Son and



the Holy Spirit; and the Son alone is sufficient because He cannot be divided from the Father and the Holy Spirit. For what does He mean by saying, “If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive,” that is, the lovers of the world? For “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” But it may perhaps seem, further, as if the words, “And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter,” were so said as if the Son alone were not sufficient. And that place so speaks of the Spirit, as if He alone were altogether sufficient: “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.” Pray, therefore, is the Son here excluded, as if He did not teach all truth, or as if the Holy Spirit were to fill up that which the Son could not fully teach? Let them say then, if it pleases them, that the Holy Spirit is greater than the Son, whom they are wont to call less. Or is it, forsooth, because it is not said, He alone,—or, No one else except Himself—will guide you into all truth, that they allow that the Son also may be believed to teach together with Him? In that case the apostle has excluded the Son from knowing those things which are of God, where he says, “Even so the things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God:” so that these perverse men might, upon this ground, go on to say that none but the Holy Spirit teaches even the Son the things of God, as the greater teaches the less; to whom the Son Himself ascribes so much as to say, “But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.”

## CHAPTER 9

### ALL ARE SOMETIMES UNDERSTOOD IN ONE PERSON

But this is said, not on account of any inequality of the Word of God and of the Holy Spirit, but as though the presence of the Son of man with them would be a hindrance to the coming of Him, who was not less, because He did not “empty Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant,” as the Son did. It was necessary, then, that the form of a servant should be taken away from their eyes, because, through gazing upon it, they thought that alone which they saw to be Christ. Hence also is that which is said, “If ye loved

me, ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I:”“ that is, on that account it is necessary for me to go to the Father, because, whilst you see me thus, you hold me to be less than the Father through that which you see; and so, being taken up with the creature and the “fashion” which I have taken upon me, you do not perceive the equality which I have with the Father. Hence, too, is this: “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” For touch, as it were, puts a limit to their conception, and He therefore would not have the thought of the heart, directed towards Himself, to be so limited as that He should be held to be only that which He seemed to be. But the “ascension to the Father” meant, so to appear as He is equal to the Father, that the limit of the sight which sufficeth us might be attained there. Sometimes also it is said of the Son alone, that He himself sufficeth, and the whole reward of our love and longing is held forth as in the sight of Him. For so it is said, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” Pray, because He has not here said, And I will show the Father also to him, has He therefore excluded the Father? On the contrary, because it is true, “I and my Father are one,” when the Father is manifested, the Son also, who is in Him, is manifested; and when the Son is manifested, the Father also, who is in Him, is manifested. As, therefore, when it is said, “And I will manifest myself to him,” it is understood that He manifests also the Father; so likewise in that which is said, “When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” it is understood that He does not take it away from Himself; since, when He shall bring believers to the contemplation of God, even the Father, doubtless He will bring them to the contemplation of Himself, who has said, “And I will manifest myself to him.” And so, consequently, when Judas had said to Him, “Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?” Jesus answered and said to him, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Behold, that He manifests not only Himself to him by whom He is loved, because He comes to him together with the Father, and abides with him.

19. Will it perhaps be thought, that when the Father and the Son make their abode with him who loves them, the Holy Spirit is excluded from that abode? What, then, is that which is said above of the Holy Spirit: “Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not: but ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and is in you”? He, therefore, is not excluded from that abode, of whom it is said, “He abideth with you, and is in you;” unless, perhaps, any one be so senseless as to think, that when the Father and the Son have come that they may make their abode with him who loves them, the Holy Spirit will depart thence, and (as it were) give place to those who are greater. But the Scripture itself meets this carnal idea; for it says a little above: “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.” He will not therefore depart when the Father and the Son come, but will be in the same abode with them eternally; because neither will He come without them, nor they without Him. But in order to intimate the Trinity, some things are separately affirmed, the Persons being also each severally named; and yet are not to be understood as though the other Persons were excluded, on account of the unity of the same Trinity and the One substance and Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

#### CHAPTER 10

IN WHAT MANNER CHRIST SHALL DELIVER UP THE KINGDOM TO GOD, EVEN THE FATHER. THE KINGDOM HAVING BEEN DELIVERED TO GOD, EVEN THE FATHER, CHRIST WILL NOT THEN MAKE INTERCESSION FOR US

20. Our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, will so deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, Himself not being thence excluded, nor the Holy Spirit, when He shall bring believers to the contemplation of God, wherein is the end of all good actions, and everlasting rest, and joy which never will be taken from us. For He signifies this in that which He says: “I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you.” Mary, sitting at the feet of the Lord, and earnestly listening to His word, foreshowed a similitude of this joy; resting as she did from all business, and intent upon the truth, according to that manner of which this life is capable, by which, however, to prefigure that which shall be for eternity. For while Martha, her sister, was cumbered about necessary business, which, although

good and useful, yet, when rest shall have succeeded, is to pass away, she herself was resting in the word of the Lord. And so the Lord replied to Martha, when she complained that her sister did not help her: “Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her.” He did not say that Martha was acting a bad part; but that “best part that shall not be taken away.” For that part which is occupied in the ministering to a need shall be “taken away” when the need itself has passed away. Since the reward of a good work that will pass away is rest that will not pass away. In that contemplation, therefore, God will be all in all; because nothing else but Himself will be required, but it will be sufficient to be enlightened by and to enjoy Him alone. And so he in whom “the Spirit maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered,” says, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to contemplate the beauty of the Lord.” For we shall then contemplate God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, when the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, so as no longer to make intercession for us, as our Mediator and Priest, Son of God and Son of man; but that He Himself too, in so far as He is a Priest that has taken the form of a servant for us, shall be put under Him who has put all things under Him, and under whom He has put all things: so that, in so far as He is God, He with Him will have put us under Himself; in so far as He is a Priest, He with us will be put under Him. And therefore as the [incarnate] Son is both God and man, it is rather to be said that the manhood in the Son is another substance [from the Son], than that the Son in the Father [is another substance from the Father]; just as the carnal nature of my soul is more another substance in relation to my soul itself, although in one and the same man, than the soul of another man is in relation to my soul.

21. When, therefore, He “shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,”—that is, when He shall have brought those who believe and live by faith, for whom now as Mediator He maketh intercession, to that contemplation, for the obtaining of which we sigh and groan, and when labor and groaning shall have passed away,—then, since the kingdom will have been delivered up to God, even the Father, He will no more make intercession for us. And this He signifies, when He says: “These things

have I spoken unto you in similitudes; but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in similitudes, but I shall declare to you plainly of the Father:" that is, they will not then be "similitudes," when the sight shall be "face to face." For this it is which He says, "But I will declare to you plainly of the Father;" as if He said I will plainly show you the Father. For He says, I will "declare" to you, because He is His word. For He goes on to say, "At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." What is meant by "I came forth from the Father," unless this, that I have not appeared in that form in which I am equal to the Father, but otherwise, that is, as less than the Father, in the creature which I have taken upon me? And what is meant by "I am come into the world," unless this, that I have manifested to the eyes even of sinners who love this world, the form of a servant which I took, making myself of no reputation? And what is meant by "Again, I leave the world," unless this, that I take away from the sight of the lovers of this world that which they have seen? And what is meant by "I go to the Father," unless this, that I teach those who are my faithful ones to understand me in that being in which I am equal to the Father? Those who believe this will be thought worthy of being brought by faith to sight, that is, to that very sight, in bringing them to which He is said to "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father." For His faithful ones, whom He has redeemed with His blood, are called His kingdom, for whom He now intercedes; but then, making them to abide in Himself there, where He is equal to the Father, He will no longer pray the Father for them. "For," He says, "the Father Himself loveth you." For indeed He "prays," in so far as He is less than the Father; but as He is equal with the Father, He with the Father grants. Wherefore He certainly does not exclude Himself from that which He says, "The Father Himself loveth you;" but He means it to be understood after that manner which I have above spoken of, and sufficiently intimated,—namely, that for the most part each Person of the Trinity is so named, that the other Persons also may be understood. Accordingly, "For the Father Himself loveth you," is so said that by consequence both the Son and the Holy Spirit also may be understood: not that He does not now love us, who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; but God

loves us, such as we shall be, not such as we are, for such as they are whom He loves, such are they whom He keeps eternally; which shall then be, when He who now maketh intercession for us shall have “delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” so as no longer to ask the Father, because the Father Himself loveth us. But for what deserving, except of faith, by which we believe before we see that which is promised? For by this faith we shall arrive at sight; so that He may love us, being such, as He loves us in order that we may become; and not such, as He hates us because we are, and exhorts and enables us to wish not to be always.

## CHAPTER 11

BY WHAT RULE IN THE SCRIPTURES IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE SON IS NOW  
EQUAL AND NOW LESS

22. Wherefore, having mastered this rule for interpreting the Scriptures concerning the Son of God, that we are to distinguish in them what relates to the form of God, in which He is equal to the Father, and what to the form of a servant which He took, in which He is less than the Father; we shall not be disquieted by apparently contrary and mutually repugnant sayings of the sacred books. For both the Son and the Holy Spirit, according to the form of God, are equal to the Father, because neither of them is a creature, as we have already shown: but according to the form of a servant He is less than the Father, because He Himself has said, “My Father is greater than I;” and He is less than Himself, because it is said of Him, He emptied Himself;” and He is less than the Holy Spirit, because He Himself says, “Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven Him.” And in the Spirit too He wrought miracles, saying: “But if I with the Spirit of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.” And in Isaiah He says,—in the lesson which He Himself read in the synagogue, and showed without a scruple of doubt to be fulfilled concerning Himself,—”The Spirit of the Lord God,” He says, “is upon me: because He hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek He hath sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives,” etc.: for the doing of which things He therefore declares Himself to be “sent,” because the Spirit of God is upon Him. According to the form of God, all things were made by Him;

according to the form of a servant, He was Himself made of a woman, made under the law. According to the form of God, He and the Father are one; according to the form of a servant, He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. According to the form of God, “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;” according to the form of a servant, His “soul is sorrowful even unto death;” and, “O my Father,” He says, “if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” According to the form of God, “He is the True God, and eternal life;” according to the form of a servant, “He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”—23. According to the form of God, all things that the Father hath are His, and “All mine,” He says, “are Thine, and Thine are mine;” according to the form of a servant, the doctrine is not His own, but His that sent Him.

## CHAPTER 12

IN WHAT MANNER THE SON IS SAID NOT TO KNOW THE DAY AND THE HOUR WHICH THE FATHER KNOWS. SOME THINGS SAID OF CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE FORM OF GOD, OTHER THINGS ACCORDING TO THE FORM OF A SERVANT. IN WHAT WAY IT IS OF CHRIST TO GIVE THE KINGDOM, IN WHAT NOT OF CHRIST. CHRIST WILL BOTH JUDGE AND NOT JUDGE

Again, “Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven; neither the Son, but the Father.” For He is ignorant of this, as making others ignorant; that is, in that He did not so know as at that time to show His disciples: as it was said to Abraham, “Now I know that thou fearest God,” that is, now I have caused thee to know it; because he himself, being tried in that temptation, became known to himself. For He was certainly going to tell this same thing to His disciples at the fitting time; speaking of which yet future as if past, He says, “Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you;” which He had not yet done, but spoke as though He had already done it, because He certainly would do it. For He says to the disciples themselves, “I have yet many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now.” Among which is to be understood also, “Of the day and hour.” For the apostle also says, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;” because he was

speaking to those who were not able to receive higher things concerning the Godhead of Christ. To whom also a little while after he says, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." He was "ignorant," therefore, among them of that which they were not able to know from him. And that only he said that he knew, which it was fitting that they should know from him. In short, he knew among the perfect what he knew not among babes; for he there says: "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect." For a man is said not to know what he hides, after that kind of speech, after which a ditch is called blind which is hidden. For the Scriptures do not use any other kind of speech than may be found in use among men, because they speak to men.

24. According to the form of God, it is said "Before all the hills He begat me," that is, before all the loftinesses of things created and, "Before the dawn I begat Thee," that is, before all times and temporal things: but according to the form of a servant, it is said, "The Lord created me in the beginning of His ways." Because, according to the form of God, He said, "I am the truth;" and according to the form of a servant, "I am the way." For, because He Himself, being the first-begotten of the dead, made a passage to the kingdom of God to life eternal for His Church, to which He is so the Head as to make the body also immortal, therefore He was "created in the beginning of the ways" of God in His work. For, according to the form of God, He is the beginning, that also speaketh unto us, in which "beginning" God created the heaven and the earth; but according to the form of a servant, "He is a bridegroom coming out of His chamber." According to the form of God, "He is the first-born of every creature, and He is before all things and by him all things consist;" according to the form of a servant, "He is the head of the body, the Church." According to the form of God, "He is the Lord of glory." From which it is evident that He Himself glorifies His saints: for, "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Of Him accordingly it is said, that He justifieth the ungodly; of Him it is said, that He is just and a justifier. If, therefore, He has also glorified those whom He has justified, He who justifies, Himself also glorifies; who is, as I have said, the Lord of glory. Yet, according to the form of a servant, He replied to His disciples, when inquiring about their



own glorification: "To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but [it shall be given to them] for whom it is prepared by my Father."

25. But that which is prepared by His Father is prepared also by the Son Himself, because He and the Father are one. For we have already shown, by many modes of speech in the divine Scriptures, that, in this Trinity, what is said of each is also said of all, on account of the indivisible working of the one and same substance. As He also says of the Holy Spirit, "If I depart, I will send Him unto you." He did not say, We will send; but in such way as if the Son only should send Him, and not the Father; while yet He says in another place, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you; but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things." Here again it is so said as if the Son also would not send Him, but the Father only. As therefore in these texts, so also where He says, "But for them for whom it is prepared by my Father," He meant it to be understood that He Himself, with the Father, prepares seats of glory for those for whom He will. But some one may say: There, when He spoke of the Holy Spirit, He so says that He Himself will send Him, as not to deny that the Father will send Him; and in the other place, He so says that the Father will send Him, as not to deny that He will do so Himself; but here He expressly says, "It is not mine to give," and so goes on to say that these things are prepared by the Father. But this is the very thing which we have already laid down to be said according to the form of a servant: viz., that we are so to understand "It is not mine to give," as if it were said, This is not in the power of man to give; that so He may be understood to give it through that wherein He is God equal to the Father. "It is not mine," He says, "to give;" that is, I do not give these things by human power, but "to those for whom it is prepared by my Father;" but then take care you understand also, that if "all things which the Father hath are mine," then this certainly is mine also, and I with the Father have prepared these things.

26. For I ask again, in what manner this is said, "If any man hear not my words, I will not judge him?" For perhaps He has said here, "I will not judge him," in the same sense as there, "It is not mine to give." But what follows here? "I came not," He says, "to judge the world, but to save the

world;” and then He adds, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him.” Now here we should understand the Father, unless He had added, “The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” Well, then, will neither the Son judge, because He says, “I will not judge him,” nor the Father, but the word which the Son hath spoken? Nay, but hear what yet follows: “For I,” He says, “have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak; and I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.” If therefore the Son judges not, but “the word which the Son hath spoken;” and the word which the Son hath spoken therefore judges, because the Son “hath not spoken of Himself, but the Father who sent Him gave Him a commandment what He should say, and what He should speak:” then the Father assuredly judges, whose word it is which the Son hath spoken; and the same Son Himself is the very Word of the Father. For the commandment of the Father is not one thing, and the word of the Father another; for He hath called it both a word and a commandment. Let us see, therefore, whether perchance, when He says, “I have not spoken of myself,” He meant to be understood thus,—I am not born of myself. For if He speaks the word of the Father, then He speaks Himself, because He is Himself the Word of the Father. For ordinarily He says, “The Father gave to me;” by which He means it to be understood that the Father begat Him: not that He gave anything to Him, already existing and not possessing it; but that the very meaning of, To have given that He might have, is, To have begotten that He might be. For it is not, as with the creature so with the Son of God before the incarnation and before He took upon Him our flesh, the Only-begotten by whom all things were made; that He is one thing, and has another: but He is in such way as to be what He has. And this is said more plainly, if any one is fit to receive it, in that place where He says: “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” For He did not give to Him, already existing and not having life, that He should have life in Himself; inasmuch as, in that He is, He is life. Therefore “He gave to the Son to have life in Himself” means, He begat the Son to be unchangeable life, which is life eternal. Since, therefore, the Word of God is the Son of God, and the Son of God is “the true God and eternal life,” as John says in his Epistle; so here,

what else are we to acknowledge when the Lord says, “The word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day,” and calls that very word the word of the Father and the commandment of the Father, and that very commandment everlasting life?” “And I know,” He says, “that His commandment is life everlasting.”

27. I ask, therefore, how we are to understand, “I will not judge him; but the Word which I have spoken shall judge him:” which appears from what follows to be so said, as if He would say, I will not judge; but the Word of the Father will judge. But the Word of the Father is the Son of God Himself. Is it to be so understood: I will not judge, but I will judge? How can this be true, unless in this way: viz., I will not judge by human power, because I am the Son of man; but I will judge by the power of the Word, because I am the Son of God? Or if it still seems contradictory and inconsistent to say, I will not judge, but I will judge; what shall we say of that place where He says, “My doctrine is not mine?” How “mine,” when “not mine?” For He did not say, This doctrine is not mine, but “My doctrine is not mine:” that which He called His own, the same He called not His own. How can this be true, unless He has called it His own in one relation; not His own, in another? According to the form of God, His own; according to the form of a servant, not His own. For when He says, “It is not mine, but His that sent me,” He makes us recur to the Word itself. For the doctrine of the Father is the Word of the Father, which is the Only Son. And what, too, does that mean, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me?” How believe on Him, yet not believe on Him? How can so opposite and inconsistent a thing be understood—”Whoso believeth on me,” He says, “believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me;”—unless you so understand it, Whoso believeth on me believeth not on that which he sees, lest our hope should be in the creature; but on Him who took the creature, whereby He might appear to human eyes, and so might cleanse our hearts by faith, to contemplate Himself as equal to the Father? So that in turning the attention of believers to the Father, and saying, “Believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me,” He certainly did not mean Himself to be separated from the Father, that is, from Him that sent Him; but that men might so believe on Himself, as they believe on the Father, to whom He is equal. And this He says in express terms in another place, “Ye believe in God, believe also in me:” that is, in

the same way as you believe in God, so also believe in me; because I and the Father are One God. As therefore, here, He has as it were withdrawn the faith of men from Himself, and transferred it to the Father, by saying, “Believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me,” from whom nevertheless He certainly did not separate Himself; so also, when He says, “It is not mine to give, but [it shall be given to them] for whom it is prepared by my Father,” it is I think plain in what relation both are to be taken. For that other also is of the same kind, “I will not judge;” whereas He Himself shall judge the quick and dead. But because He will not do so by human power, therefore, reverting to the Godhead, He raises the hearts of men upwards; which to lift up, He Himself came down.

### CHAPTER 13

DIVERSE THINGS ARE SPOKEN CONCERNING THE SAME CHRIST, ON ACCOUNT OF THE DIVERSE NATURES OF THE ONE HYPOSTASIS [THE ANTHROPIC PERSON]. WHY IT IS SAID THAT THE FATHER WILL NOT JUDGE, BUT HAS GIVEN JUDGMENT TO THE SON

28. Yet unless the very same were the Son of man on account of the form of a servant which He took, who is the Son of God on account of the form of God in which He is; Paul the apostle would not say of the princes of this world, “For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” For He was crucified after the form of a servant, and yet “the Lord of glory” was crucified. For that “taking” was such as to make God man, and man God. Yet what is said on account of what, and what according to what, the thoughtful, diligent, and pious reader discerns for himself, the Lord being his helper. For instance, we have said that He glorifies His own, as being God, and certainly then as being the Lord of glory; and yet the Lord of glory was crucified, because even God is rightly said to have been crucified, not after the power of the divinity, but after the weakness of the flesh: just as we say, that He judges as God, that is, by divine power, not by human; and yet the man Himself will judge, just as the Lord of glory was crucified: for so He expressly says, “When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, and before Him shall be gathered all nations;” and the rest that is foretold of the future judgment in that place even to the last sentence. And the Jews, inasmuch as they will be punished in that judgment for persisting in their wickedness, as it is

elsewhere written, “shall look upon Him whom they have pierced.” For whereas both good and bad shall see the Judge of the quick and dead, without doubt the bad will not be able to see Him, except after the form in which He is the Son of man; but yet in the glory wherein He will judge, not in the lowliness wherein He was judged. But the ungodly without doubt will not see that form of God in which He is equal to the Father. For they are not pure in heart; and “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” And that sight is face to face, the very sight that is promised as the highest reward to the just, and which will then take place when He “shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;” and in this “kingdom” He means the sight of His own form also to be understood, the whole creature being made subject to God, including that wherein the Son of God was made the Son of man. Because, according to this creature, “The Son also Himself shall be subject unto Him, that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” Otherwise if the Son of God, judging in the form in which He is equal to the Father, shall appear when He judges to the ungodly also; what becomes of that which He promises, as some great thing, to him who loves Him, saying, “And I will love him, and will manifest myself to him?” Wherefore He will judge as the Son of man, yet not by human power, but by that whereby He is the Son of God; and on the other hand, He will judge as the Son of God, yet not appearing in that [unincarnate] form in which He is God equal to the Father, but in that [incarnate form] in which He is the Son of man.

29. Therefore both ways of speaking may be used; the Son of man will judge, and, the Son of man will not judge: since the Son of man will judge, that the text may be true which says, “When the Son of man shall come, then before Him shall be gathered all nations;” and the Son of man will not judge, that the text may be true which says, “I will not judge him;” and, “I seek not mine own glory: there is One that seeketh and judgeth.” For in respect to this, that in the judgment, not the form of God, but the form of the Son of man will appear, the Father Himself will not judge; for according to this it is said, “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” Whether this is said after that mode of speech which we have mentioned above, where it is said, “So hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself,” that it should signify that so He begat the Son;

or, whether after that of which the apostle speaks, saying, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name:”—(For this is said of the Son of man, in respect to whom the Son of God was raised from the dead; since He, being in the form of God equal to the Father, wherefrom He “emptied” Himself by taking the form of a servant, both acts and suffers, and receives, in that same form of a servant, what the apostle goes on to mention: “He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, in the Glory of God the Father:”—whether then the words, “He hath committed all judgment unto the Son,” are said according to this or that mode of speech; it sufficiently appears from this place, that if they were said according to that sense in which it is said, “He hath given to the Son to have life in Himself,” it certainly would not be said, “The Father judgeth no man.” For in respect to this, that the Father hath begotten the Son equal to Himself, He judges with Him. Therefore it is in respect to this that it is said, that in the judgment, not the form of God, but the form of the Son of man will appear. Not that He will not judge, who hath committed all judgment unto the Son, since the Son saith of Him, “There is One that seeketh and judgeth:” but it is so said, “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;” as if it were said, No one will see the Father in the judgment of the quick and the dead, but all will see the Son: because He is also the Son of man, so that He can be seen even by the ungodly, since they too shall see Him whom they have pierced.

30. Lest, however, we may seem to conjecture this rather than to prove it clearly, let us produce a certain and plain sentence of the Lord Himself, by which we may show that this was the cause why He said, “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,” viz. because He will appear as Judge in the form of the Son of man, which is not the form of the Father, but of the Son; nor yet that form of the Son in which He is equal to the Father, but that in which He is less than the Father; in order that, in the judgment, He may be visible both to the good and to the

bad. For a little while after He says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but shall pass from death unto life.” Now this life eternal is that sight which does not belong to the bad. Then follows, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” And this is proper to the godly, who so hear of His incarnation, as to believe that He is the Son of God, that is, who so receive Him, as made for their sakes less than the Father, in the form of a servant, that they believe Him equal to the Father, in the form of God. And thereupon He continues, enforcing this very point, “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” And then He comes to the sight of His own glory, in which He shall come to judgment; which sight will be common to the ungodly and to the just. For He goes on to say, “And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” I think nothing can be more clear. For inasmuch as the Son of God is equal to the Father, He does not receive this power of executing judgment, but He has it with the Father in secret; but He receives it, so that the good and the bad may see Him judging, inasmuch as He is the Son of man. Since the sight of the Son of man will be shown to the bad also: for the sight of the form of God will not be shown except to the pure in heart, for they shall see God; that is, to the godly only, to whose love He promises this very thing, that He will show Himself to them. And see, accordingly, what follows: “Marvel not at this,” He says. Why does He forbid us to marvel, unless it be that, in truth, every one marvels who does not understand, that therefore He said the Father gave Him power also to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man; whereas, it might rather have been anticipated that He would say, since He is the Son of God? But because the wicked are not able to see the Son of God as He is in the form of God equal to the Father, but yet it is necessary that both the just and the wicked should see the Judge of the quick and dead, when they will be judged in His presence; “Marvel not at this,” He says, “for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” For this purpose, then, it was necessary that He should therefore receive that power, because

He is the Son of man, in order that all in rising again might see Him in the form in which He can be seen by all, but by some to damnation, by others to life eternal. And what is life eternal, unless that sight which is not granted to the ungodly? "That they might know Thee," He says, "the One true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." And how are they to know Jesus Christ Himself also, unless as the One true God, who will show Himself to them; not as He will show Himself, in the form of the Son of man, to those also that shall be punished?

31. He is "good," according to that sight, according to which God appears to the pure in heart; for "truly God is good unto Israel even to such as are of a clean heart." But when the wicked shall see the Judge, He will not seem good to them; because they will not rejoice in their heart to see Him, but all "kindreds of the earth shall then wail because of Him," namely, as being reckoned in the number of all the wicked and unbelievers. On this account also He replied to him, who had called Him Good Master, when seeking advice of Him how he might attain eternal life, "Why askest thou me about good? there is none good but One, that is, God." And yet the Lord Himself, in another place, calls man good: "A good man," He says, "out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things." But because that man was seeking eternal life, and eternal life consists in that contemplation in which God is seen, not for punishment, but for everlasting joy; and because he did not understand with whom he was speaking, and thought Him to be only the Son of man: Why, He says, askest thou me about good? that is, with respect to that form which thou seest, why askest thou about good, and callest me, according to what thou seest, Good Master? This is the form of the Son of man, the form which has been taken, the form that will appear in judgment, not only to the righteous, but also to the ungodly; and the sight of this form will not be for good to those who are wicked. But there is a sight of that form of mine, in which when I was, I thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but in order to take this form I emptied myself. That one God, therefore, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who will not appear, except for joy which cannot be taken away from the just; for which future joy he sighs, who says, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of



my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord:" that one God, therefore, Himself, I say, is alone good, for this reason, that no one sees Him for sorrow and wailing, but only for salvation and true joy. If you understand me after this latter form, then I am good; but if according to that former only, then why askest thou me about good? If thou art among those who "shall look upon Him whom they have pierced," that very sight itself will be evil to them, because it will be penal. That after this meaning, then, the Lord said, "Why askest thou me about good? there is none good but One, that is, God," is probable upon those proofs which I have alleged, because that sight of God, whereby we shall contemplate the substance of God unchangeable and invisible to human eyes (which is promised to the saints alone; which the Apostle Paul speaks of, as "face to face;" and of which the Apostle John says, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is;" and of which it is said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord," and of which the Lord Himself says, "I will both love him, and will manifest myself to him;" and on account of which alone we cleanse our hearts by faith, that we may be those "pure in heart who are blessed for they shall see God:" and whatever else is spoken of that sight: which whosoever turns the eye of love to seek it, may find most copiously scattered through all the Scriptures),—that sight alone, I say, is our chief good, for the attaining of which we are directed to do whatever we do aright. But that sight of the Son of man which is foretold, when all nations shall be gathered before Him, and shall say to Him, "Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or thirsty, etc.?" will neither be a good to the ungodly, who shall be sent into everlasting fire, nor the chief good to the righteous. For He still goes on to call these to the kingdom which has been prepared for them from the foundation of the world. For, as He will say to those, "Depart into everlasting fire;" so to these, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." And as those will go into everlasting burning; so the righteous will go into life eternal. But what is life eternal, except "that they may know Thee," He says, "the One true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent?" but know Him now in that glory of which He says to the Father, "Which I had with Thee before the world was." For then He will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that the good servant may enter into the joy of his Lord, and that He may hide those whom God keeps in the hiding of His countenance from the confusion of

men, namely, of those men who shall then be confounded by hearing this sentence; of which evil hearing “the righteous man shall not be afraid” if only he be kept in “the tabernacle,” that is, in the true faith of the Catholic Church, from “the strife of tongues,” that is, from the sophistries of heretics. But if there is any other explanation of the words of the Lord, where He says, “Why asketh thou me about good? there is none good, but One, that is, God;” provided only that the substance of the Father be not therefore believed to be of greater goodness than that of the Son, according to which He is the Word by whom all things were made; and if there is nothing in it abhorrent from sound doctrine; let us securely use it, and not one explanation only, but as many as we are able to find. For so much the more powerfully are the heretics proved wrong, the more outlets are open for avoiding their snares. But let us now start afresh, and address ourselves to the consideration of that which still remains.

## Book II

Augustin pursues his defense of the equality of the Trinity; and in treating of the sending of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and of the various appearances of God, demonstrates that He who is sent is not therefore less than He who sends, because the one has sent, the other has been sent; but that the Trinity, being in all things equal, and alike in its own nature unchangeable and invisible and omnipresent, works indivisibly in each sending or appearance.

### PREFACE

When men seek to know God, and bend their minds according to the capacity of human weakness to the understanding of the Trinity; learning, as they must, by experience, the wearisome difficulties of the task, whether from the sight itself of the mind striving to gaze upon light unapproachable, or, indeed, from the manifold and various modes of speech employed in the sacred writings (wherein, as it seems to me, the mind is nothing else but roughly exercised, in order that it may find sweetness when glorified by the grace of Christ);—such men, I say, when they have dispelled every ambiguity, and arrived at something certain, ought of all others most easily to make allowance for those who err in the investigation of so deep a secret. But there are two things most hard to bear with, in the case of those who are in error: hasty assumption before the truth is made plain; and, when it has been made plain, defence of the falsehood thus hastily assumed. From which two faults, inimical as they are to the finding out of the truth, and to the handling of the divine and sacred books, should God, as I pray and hope, defend and protect me with the shield of His good will, and with the grace of His mercy, I will not be slow to search out the substance of God, whether through His Scripture or through the creature. For both of these are set forth for our contemplation to this end, that He may Himself be sought,

and Himself be loved, who inspired the one, and created the other. Nor shall I be afraid of giving my opinion, in which I shall more desire to be examined by the upright, than fear to be carped at by the perverse. For charity, most excellent and unassuming, gratefully accepts the dovelike eye; but for the dog's tooth nothing remains, save either to shun it by the most cautious humility, or to blunt it by the most solid truth; and far rather would I be censured by any one whatsoever, than be praised by either the erring or the flatterer. For the lover of truth need fear no one's censure. For he that censures, must needs be either enemy or friend. And if an enemy reviles, he must be borne with: but a friend, if he errs, must be taught; if he teaches, listened to. But if one who errs praises you, he confirms your error; if one who flatters, he seduces you into error. "Let the righteous," therefore, "smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me; but the oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head."

#### CHAPTER 1

THERE IS A DOUBLE RULE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE SCRIPTURAL MODES OF SPEECH CONCERNING THE SON OF GOD. THESE MODES OF SPEECH ARE OF A THREEFOLD KIND

2. Wherefore, although we hold most firmly, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, what may be called the canonical rule, as it is both disseminated through the Scriptures, and has been demonstrated by learned and Catholic handlers of the same Scriptures, namely, that the Son of God is both understood to be equal to the Father according to the form of God in which He is, and less than the Father according to the form of a servant which He took; in which form He was found to be not only less than the Father, but also less than the Holy Spirit; and not only so, but less even than Himself, —not than Himself who was, but than Himself who is; because, by taking the form of a servant, He did not lose the form of God, as the testimonies of the Scriptures taught us, to which we have referred in the former book: yet there are some things in the sacred text so put as to leave it ambiguous to which rule they are rather to be referred; whether to that by which we understand the Son as less, in that He has taken upon Him the creature, or to that by which we understand that the Son is not indeed less than, but equal to the Father, but yet that He is from Him, God of God, Light of light. For

we call the Son God of God; but the Father, God only; not of God. Whence it is plain that the Son has another of whom He is, and to whom He is Son; but that the Father has not a Son of whom He is, but only to whom He is father. For every son is what he is, of his father, and is son to his father; but no father is what he is, of his son, but is father to his son.

3. Some things, then, are so put in the Scriptures concerning the Father and the Son, as to intimate the unity and equality of their substance; as, for instance, “I and the Father are one;” and, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;” and whatever other texts there are of the kind. And some, again, are so put that they show the Son as less on account of the form of a servant, that is, of His having taken upon Him the creature of a changeable and human substance; as, for instance, that which says, “For my Father is greater than I;” and, “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” For a little after he goes on to say, “And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” And further, some are so put, as to show Him at that time neither as less nor as equal, but only to intimate that He is of the Father; as, for instance, that which says, “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;” and that other: “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” For if we shall take this to be therefore so said, because the Son is less in the form taken from the creature, it will follow that the Father must have walked on the water, or opened the eyes with clay and spittle of some other one born blind, and have done the other things which the Son appearing in the flesh did among men, before the Son did them; in order that He might be able to do those things, who said that the Son was not able to do anything of Himself, except what He hath seen the Father do. Yet who, even though he were mad, would think this? It remains, therefore, that these texts are so expressed, because the life of the Son is unchangeable as that of the Father is, and yet He is of the Father; and the working of the Father and of the Son is indivisible, and yet so to work is given to the Son from Him of whom He Himself is, that is, from the Father; and the Son so sees the Father, as that He is the Son in the very seeing Him. For to be of the Father, that is, to be born of the Father, is to Him nothing else than to see the Father; and to see Him working, is nothing else than to work with Him: but

therefore not from Himself, because He is not from Himself. And, therefore, those things which “He sees the Father do, these also doeth the Son likewise,” because He is of the Father. For He neither does other things in like manner, as a painter paints other pictures, in the same way as he sees others to have been painted by another man; nor the same things in a different manner, as the body expresses the same letters, which the mind has thought; but “whatsoever things,” saith He, “the Father doeth, these same things also doeth the Son likewise.” He has said both “these same things,” and “likewise;” and hence the working of both the Father and the Son is indivisible and equal, but it is from the Father to the Son. Therefore the Son cannot do anything of Himself, except what He seeth the Father do. From this rule, then, whereby the Scriptures so speak as to mean, not to set forth one as less than another, but only to show which is of which, some have drawn this meaning, as if the Son were said to be less. And some among ourselves who are more unlearned and least instructed in these things, endeavoring to take these texts according to the form of a servant, and so misinterpreting them, are troubled. And to prevent this, the rule in question is to be observed whereby the Son is not less, but it is simply intimated that He is of the Father, in which words not His inequality but His birth is declared.

## CHAPTER 2

### THAT SOME WAYS OF SPEAKING CONCERNING THE SON ARE TO BE UNDERSTOOD ACCORDING TO EITHER RULE

4. There are, then, some things in the sacred books, as I began by saying, so put, that it is doubtful to which they are to be referred: whether to that rule whereby the Son is less on account of His having taken the creature; or whether to that whereby it is intimated that although equal, yet He is of the Father. And in my opinion, if this is in such way doubtful, that which it really is can neither be explained nor discerned, then such passages may without danger be understood according to either rule, as that, for instance, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.” For this may both be taken according to the form of a servant, as we have already treated it in the former book; or according to the form of God, in which He is in such way equal to the Father, that He is yet of the Father. For according to the form of

God, as the Son is not one and His life another, but the life itself is the Son; so the Son is not one and His doctrine another, but the doctrine itself is the Son. And hence, as the text, “He hath given life to the Son,” is no otherwise to be understood than, He hath begotten the Son, who is life; so also when it is said, He hath given doctrine to the Son, it may be rightly understood to mean, He hath begotten the Son, who is doctrine so that, when it is said, “My doctrine is not mine, but His who sent me,” it is so to be understood as if it were, I am not from myself, but from Him who sent me.

### CHAPTER 3

#### SOME THINGS CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE TO BE UNDERSTOOD ACCORDING TO THE ONE RULE ONLY

5. For even of the Holy Spirit, of whom it is not said, “He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant;” yet the Lord Himself says, “Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” And except He had immediately gone on to say after this, “All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you;” it might, perhaps, have been believed that the Holy Spirit was so born of Christ, as Christ is of the Father. Since He had said of Himself, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me;” but of the Holy Spirit, “For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall He speak;” and, “For He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” But because He has rendered the reason why He said, “He shall receive of mine” (for He says, “All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine”); it remains that the Holy Spirit be understood to have of that which is the Father’s, as the Son also hath. And how can this be, unless according to that which we have said above, “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me”? He is said, therefore, not to speak of Himself, in that He proceedeth from the Father; and as it does not follow that the Son is less because He said, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do” (for

He has not said this according to the form of a servant, but according to the form of God, as we have already shown, and these words do not set Him forth as less than, but as of the Father), so it is not brought to pass that the Holy Spirit is less, because it is said of Him, “For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak;” for the words belong to Him as proceeding from the Father. But whereas both the Son is of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, why both are not called sons, and both not said to be begotten, but the former is called the one only-begotten Son, and the latter, viz. the Holy Spirit, neither son nor begotten, because if begotten, then certainly a son, we will discuss in another place, if God shall grant, and so far as He shall grant.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### THE GLORIFICATION OF THE SON BY THE FATHER DOES NOT PROVE INEQUALITY

6. But here also let them wake up if they can, who have thought this, too, to be a testimony on their side, to show that the Father is greater than the Son, because the Son hath said, “Father, glorify me.” Why, the Holy Spirit also glorifies Him. Pray, is the Spirit, too, greater than He? Moreover, if on that account the Holy Spirit glorifies the Son, because He shall receive of that which is the Son’s, and shall therefore receive of that which is the Son’s because all things that the Father has are the Son’s also; it is evident that when the Holy Spirit glorifies the Son, the Father glorifies the Son. Whence it may be perceived that all things that the Father hath are not only of the Son, but also of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is able to glorify the Son, whom the Father glorifies. But if he who glorifies is greater than he whom he glorifies, let them allow that those are equal who mutually glorify each other. But it is written, also, that the Son glorifies the Father; for He says, “I have glorified Thee on the earth.” Truly let them beware lest the Holy Spirit be thought greater than both, because He glorifies the Son whom the Father glorifies, while it is not written that He Himself is glorified either by the Father or by the Son.



## CHAPTER 5

THE SON AND HOLY SPIRIT ARE NOT THEREFORE LESS BECAUSE SENT. THE SON IS SENT ALSO BY HIMSELF. OF THE SENDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

7. But being proved wrong so far, men betake themselves to saying, that he who sends is greater than he who is sent: therefore the Father is greater than the Son, because the Son continually speaks of Himself as being sent by the Father; and the Father is also greater than the Holy Spirit, because Jesus has said of the Spirit, "Whom the Father will send in my name;" and the Holy Spirit is less than both, because both the Father sends Him, as we have said, and the Son, when He says, "But if I depart, I will send Him unto you." I first ask, then, in this inquiry, whence and whither the Son was sent. "I," He says, "came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." Therefore, to be sent, is to come forth from the Father, and to come into the world. What, then, is that which the same evangelist says concerning Him, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not;" and then he adds, "He came unto His own?" Certainly He was sent thither, whither He came; but if He was sent into the world, because He came forth from the Father, then He both came into the world and was in the world. He was sent therefore thither, where He already was. For consider that, too, which is written in the prophet, that God said, "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" If this is said of the Son (for some will have it understood that the Son Himself spoke either by the prophets or in the prophets), whither was He sent except to the place where He already was? For He who says, "I fill heaven and earth," was everywhere. But if it is said of the Father, where could He be without His own word and without His own wisdom, which "reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordereth all things?" But He cannot be anywhere without His own Spirit. Therefore, if God is everywhere, His Spirit also is everywhere. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, too, was sent thither, where He already was. For he, too, who finds no place to which he might go from the presence of God, and who says, "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I shall go down into hell, behold, Thou art there;" wishing it to be understood that God is present everywhere, named in the previous verse His Spirit; for He says, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?"

8. For this reason, then, if both the Son and the Holy Spirit are sent thither where they were, we must inquire, how that sending, whether of the Son or of the Holy Spirit, is to be understood; for of the Father alone, we nowhere read that He is sent. Now, of the Son, the apostle writes thus: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." "He sent," he says, "His Son, made of a woman." And by this term, woman, what Catholic does not know that he did not wish to signify the privation of virginity; but, according to a Hebraism, the difference of sex? When, therefore, he says, "God sent His Son, made of a woman," he sufficiently shows that the Son was "sent" in this very way, in that He was "made of a woman." Therefore, in that He was born of God, He was in the world; but in that He was born of Mary, He was sent and came into the world. Moreover, He could not be sent by the Father without the Holy Spirit, not only because the Father, when He sent Him, that is, when He made Him of a woman, is certainly understood not to have so made Him without His own Spirit; but also because it is most plainly and expressly said in the Gospel in answer to the Virgin Mary, when she asked of the angel, "How shall this be?" "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." And Matthew says, "She was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Although, too, in the prophet Isaiah, Christ Himself is understood to say of His own future advent, "And now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me."

9. Perhaps some one may wish to drive us to say, that the Son is sent also by Himself, because the conception and childbirth of Mary is the working of the Trinity, by whose act of creating all things are created. And how, he will go on to say, has the Father sent Him, if He sent Himself? To whom I answer first, by asking him to tell me, if he can, in what manner the Father hath sanctified Him, if He hath sanctified Himself? For the same Lord says both; "Say ye of Him," He says, "whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God;" while in another place He says, "And for their sake I sanctify myself." I ask, also, in what manner the Father delivered Him, if He delivered Himself? For the Apostle Paul says both: "Who," he says, "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all;" while elsewhere he says of the Saviour

Himself, "Who loved me, and delivered Himself for me." He will reply, I suppose, if he has a right sense in these things, Because the will of the Father and the Son is one, and their working indivisible. In like manner, then, let him understand the incarnation and nativity of the Virgin, wherein the Son is understood as sent, to have been wrought by one and the same operation of the Father and of the Son indivisibly; the Holy Spirit certainly not being thence excluded, of whom it is expressly said, "She was found with child by the Holy Ghost." For perhaps our meaning will be more plainly unfolded, if we ask in what manner God sent His Son. He commanded that He should come, and He, complying with the commandment, came. Did He then request, or did He only suggest? But whichever of these it was, certainly it was done by a word, and the Word of God is the Son of God Himself. Wherefore, since the Father sent Him by a word, His being sent was the work of both the Father and His Word; therefore the same Son was sent by the Father and the Son, because the Son Himself is the Word of the Father. For who would embrace so impious an opinion as to think the Father to have uttered a word in time, in order that the eternal Son might thereby be sent and might appear in the flesh in the fullness of time? But assuredly it was in that Word of God itself which was in the beginning with God and was God, namely, in the wisdom itself of God, apart from time, at what time that wisdom must needs appear in the flesh. Therefore, since without any commencement of time, the Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, it was in the Word itself without any time, at what time the Word was to be made flesh and dwell among us. And when this fullness of time had come, "God sent His Son, made of a woman," that is, made in time, that the Incarnate Word might appear to men; while it was in that Word Himself, apart from time, at what time this was to be done; for the order of times is in the eternal wisdom of God without time. Since, then, that the Son should appear in the flesh was wrought by both the Father and the Son, it is fitly said that He who appeared in that flesh was sent, and that He who did not appear in it, sent Him; because those things which are transacted outwardly before the bodily eyes have their existence from the inward structure (apparatu) of the spiritual nature, and on that account are fitly said to be sent. Further, that form of man which He took is the person of the Son, not also of the Father; on which account the invisible Father, together with the

Son, who with the Father is invisible, is said to have sent the same Son by making Him visible. But if He became visible in such way as to cease to be invisible with the Father, that is, if the substance of the invisible Word were turned by a change and transition into a visible creature, then the Son would be so understood to be sent by the Father, that He would be found to be only sent; not also, with the Father, sending. But since He so took the form of a servant, as that the unchangeable form of God remained, it is clear that that which became apparent in the Son was done by the Father and the Son not being apparent; that is, that by the invisible Father, with the invisible Son, the same Son Himself was sent so as to be visible. Why, therefore, does He say, “Neither came I of myself?” This, we may now say, is said according to the form of a servant, in the same way as it is said, “I judge no man.”

10. If, therefore, He is said to be sent, in so far as He appeared outwardly in the bodily creature, who inwardly in His spiritual nature is always hidden from the eyes of mortals, it is now easy to understand also of the Holy Spirit why He too is said to be sent. For in due time a certain outward appearance of the creature was wrought, wherein the Holy Spirit might be visibly shown; whether when He descended upon the Lord Himself in a bodily shape as a dove, or when, ten days having past since His ascension, on the day of Pentecost a sound came suddenly from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and cloven tongues like as of fire were seen upon them, and it sat upon each of them. This operation, visibly exhibited, and presented to mortal eyes, is called the sending of the Holy Spirit; not that His very substance appeared, in which He himself also is invisible and unchangeable, like the Father and the Son, but that the hearts of men, touched by things seen outwardly, might be turned from the manifestation in time of Him as coming to His hidden eternity as ever present.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE CREATURE IS NOT SO TAKEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT AS FLESH IS BY THE WORD

11. It is, then, for this reason nowhere written, that the Father is greater than the Holy Spirit, or that the Holy Spirit is less than God the Father, because the creature in which the Holy Spirit was to appear was not taken in the

same way as the Son of man was taken, as the form in which the person of the Word of God Himself should be set forth not that He might possess the word of God, as other holy and wise men have possessed it, but “above His fellows;” not certainly that He possessed the word more than they, so as to be of more surpassing wisdom than the rest were, but that He was the very Word Himself. For the word in the flesh is one thing, and the Word made flesh is another; i.e. the word in man is one thing, the Word that is man is another. For flesh is put for man, where it is said, “The Word was made flesh;” and again, “And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” For it does not mean flesh without soul and without mind; but “all flesh,” is the same as if it were said, every man. The creature, then, in which the Holy Spirit should appear, was not so taken, as that flesh and human form were taken, of the Virgin Mary. For the Spirit did not beatify the dove, or the wind, or the fire, and join them for ever to Himself and to His person in unity and “fashion.” Nor, again, is the nature of the Holy Spirit mutable and changeable; so that these things were not made of the creature, but He himself was turned and changed first into one and then into another, as water is changed into ice. But these things appeared at the seasons at which they ought to have appeared, the creature serving the Creator, and being changed and converted at the command of Him who remains immutably in Himself, in order to signify and manifest Him in such way as it was fit He should be signified and manifested to mortal men. Accordingly, although that dove is called the Spirit; and in speaking of that fire, “There appeared unto them,” he says, “cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance; in order to show that the Spirit was manifested by that fire, as by the dove; yet we cannot call the Holy Spirit both God and a dove, or both God and fire, in the same way as we call the Son both God and man; nor as we call the Son the Lamb of God; which not only John the Baptist says, “Behold the Lamb of God,” but also John the Evangelist sees the Lamb slain in the Apocalypse. For that prophetic vision was not shown to bodily eyes through bodily forms, but in the spirit through spiritual images of bodily things. But whosoever saw that dove and that fire, saw them with their eyes. Although it may perhaps be disputed concerning the fire, whether it was seen by the eyes or in the spirit, on account of the form of the sentence. For the text does not say, They saw cloven tongues like fire,

but, “There appeared to them.” But we are not wont to say with the same meaning, It appeared to me; as we say, I saw. And in those spiritual visions of corporeal images the usual expressions are, both, It appeared to me; and, I saw: but in those things which are shown to the eyes through express corporeal forms, the common expression is not, It appeared to me; but, I saw. There may, therefore, be a question raised respecting that fire, how it was seen; whether within in the spirit as it were outwardly, or really outwardly before the eyes of the flesh. But of that dove, which is said to have descended in a bodily form, no one ever doubted that it was seen by the eyes. Nor, again, as we call the Son a Rock (for it is written, “And that Rock was Christ” ), can we so call the Spirit a dove or fire. For that rock was a thing already created, and after the mode of its action was called by the name of Christ, whom it signified; like the stone placed under Jacob’s head, and also anointed, which he took in order to signify the Lord; or as Isaac was Christ, when he carried the wood for the sacrifice of himself. A particular significative action was added to those already existing things; they did not, as that dove and fire, suddenly come into being in order simply so to signify. The dove and the fire, indeed, seem to me more like that flame which appeared to Moses in the bush, or that pillar which the people followed in the wilderness, or the thunders and lightnings which came when the Law was given in the mount. For the corporeal form of these things came into being for the very purpose, that it might signify something, and then pass away.

## CHAPTER 7

### A DOUBT RAISED ABOUT DIVINE APPEARANCES

12. The Holy Spirit, then, is also said to be sent, on account of these corporeal forms which came into existence in time, in order to signify and manifest Him, as He must needs be manifested, to human senses; yet He is not said to be less than the Father, as the Son, because He was in the form of a servant, is said to be; because that form of a servant inhered in the unity of the person of the Son, but those corporeal forms appeared for a time, in order to show what was necessary to be shown, and then ceased to be. Why, then, is not the Father also said to be sent, through those corporeal forms, the fire of the bush, and the pillar of cloud or of fire, and the lightnings in

the mount, and whatever other things of the kind appeared at that time, when (as we have learned from Scripture testimony) He spake face to face with the fathers, if He Himself was manifested by those modes and forms of the creature, as exhibited and presented corporeally to human sight? But if the Son was manifested by them, why is He said to be sent so long after, when He was made of a woman, as the apostle says, “But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman,” seeing that He was sent also before, when He appeared to the fathers by those changeable forms of the creature? Or if He cannot rightly be said to be sent, unless when the Word was made flesh, why is the Holy Spirit said to be sent, of whom no such incarnation was ever wrought? But if by those visible things, which are put before us in the Law and in the prophets, neither the Father nor the Son but the Holy Spirit was manifested, why also is He said to be sent now, when He was sent also before after these modes?

13. In the perplexity of this inquiry, the Lord helping us, we must ask, first, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; or whether, sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Holy Spirit; or whether it was without any distinction of persons, in such way as the one and only God is spoken of, that is, that the Trinity itself appeared to the Fathers by those forms of the creature. Next, whichever of these alternatives shall have been found or thought true, whether for this purpose only the creature was fashioned, wherein God, as He judged it suitable at that time, should be shown to human sight; or whether angels, who already existed, were so sent, as to speak in the person of God, taking a corporeal form from the corporeal creature, for the purpose of their ministry, as each had need; or else, according to the power the Creator has given them, changing and converting their own body itself, to which they are not subject, but govern it as subject to themselves, into whatever appearances they would that were suited and apt to their several actions. Lastly, we shall discern that which it was our purpose to ask, viz. whether the Son and the Holy Spirit were also sent before; and, if they were so sent, what difference there is between that sending, and the one which we read of in the Gospel; or whether in truth neither of them were sent, except when either the Son was made of the Virgin Mary, or the Holy Spirit appeared in a visible form, whether in the dove or in tongues of fire.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE ENTIRE TRINITY INVISIBLE

14. Let us therefore say nothing of those who, with an over carnal mind, have thought the nature of the Word of God, and the Wisdom, which, “remaining in herself, maketh all things new,” whom we call the only Son of God, not only to be changeable, but also to be visible. For these, with more audacity than religion, bring a very dull heart to the inquiry into divine things. For whereas the soul is a spiritual substance, and whereas itself also was made, yet could not be made by any other than by Him by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing is made, it, although changeable, is yet not visible; and this they have believed to be the case with the Word Himself and with the Wisdom of God itself, by which the soul was made; whereas this Wisdom is not only invisible, as the soul also is, but likewise unchangeable, which the soul is not. It is in truth the same unchangeableness in it, which is referred to when it was said, “Remaining in herself she maketh all things new.” Yet these people, endeavoring, as it were, to prop up their error in its fall by testimonies of the divine Scriptures, adduce the words of the Apostle Paul; and take that, which is said of the one only God, in whom the Trinity itself is understood, to be said only of the Father, and neither of the Son nor of the Holy Spirit: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever;” and that other passage, “The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” How these passages are to be understood, I think we have already discoursed sufficiently.

## CHAPTER 9

### AGAINST THOSE WHO BELIEVED THE FATHER ONLY TO BE IMMORTAL AND INVISIBLE. THE TRUTH TO BE SOUGHT BY PEACEFUL STUDY

15. But they who will have these texts understood only of the Father, and not of the Son or the Holy Spirit, declare the Son to be visible, not by having taken flesh of the Virgin, but aforetime also in Himself. For He Himself, they say, appeared to the eyes of the Fathers. And if you say to



them, In whatever manner, then, the Son is visible in Himself, in that manner also He is mortal in Himself; so that it plainly follows that you would have this saying also understood only of the Father, viz., “Who only hath immortality;” for if the Son is mortal from having taken upon Him our flesh, then allow that it is on account of this flesh that He is also visible: they reply, that it is not on account of this flesh that they say that the Son is mortal; but that, just as He was also before visible, so He was also before mortal. For if they say the Son is mortal from having taken our flesh, then it is not the Father alone without the Son who hath immortality; because His Word also has immortality, by which all things were made. For He did not therefore lose His immortality, because He took mortal flesh; seeing that it could not happen even to the human soul, that it should die with the body, when the Lord Himself says, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.” Or, forsooth, also the Holy Spirit took flesh: concerning whom certainly they will, without doubt, be troubled to say—if the Son is mortal on account of taking our flesh—in what manner they understand that the Father only has immortality without the Son and the Holy Spirit, since, indeed, the Holy Spirit did not take our flesh; and if He has not immortality, then the Son is not mortal on account of taking our flesh; but if the Holy Spirit has immortality, then it is not said only of the Father, “Who only hath immortality.” And therefore they think they are able to prove that the Son in Himself was mortal also before the incarnation, because changeableness itself is not unfitly called mortality, according to which the soul also is said to die; not because it is changed and turned into body, or into some substance other than itself, but because, whatever in its own selfsame substance is now after another mode than it once was, is discovered to be mortal, in so far as it has ceased to be what it was. Because then, say they, before the Son of God was born of the Virgin Mary, He Himself appeared to our fathers, not in one and the same form only, but in many forms; first in one form, then in another; He is both visible in Himself, because His substance was visible to mortal eyes, when He had not yet taken our flesh, and mortal, inasmuch as He is changeable. And so also the Holy Spirit, who appeared at one time as a dove, and another time as fire. Whence, they say, the following texts do not belong to the Trinity, but singularly and properly to the Father only: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God;” and, “Who only hath

immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.”

16. Passing by, then, these reasoners, who are unable to know the substance even of the soul, which is invisible, and therefore are very far indeed from knowing that the substance of the one and only God, that is, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, remains ever not only invisible, but also unchangeable, and that hence it possesses true and real immortality; let us, who deny that God, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, ever appeared to bodily eyes, unless through the corporeal creature made subject to His own power; let us, I say—ready to be corrected, if we are reproved in a fraternal and upright spirit, ready to be so, even if carped at by an enemy, so that he speak the truth—in catholic peace and with peaceful study inquire, whether God indiscriminately appeared to our fathers before Christ came in the flesh, or whether it was any one person of the Trinity, or whether severally, as it were by turns.

#### CHAPTER 10

WHETHER GOD THE TRINITY INDISCRIMINATELY APPEARED TO THE FATHERS, OR ANY ONE PERSON OF THE TRINITY. THE APPEARING OF GOD TO ADAM. OF THE SAME APPEARANCE. THE VISION TO ABRAHAM

17. And first, in that which is written in Genesis, viz., that God spake with man whom He had formed out of the dust; if we set apart the figurative meaning, and treat it so as to place faith in the narrative even in the letter, it should appear that God then spake with man in the appearance of a man. This is not indeed expressly laid down in the book, but the general tenor of its reading sounds in this sense, especially in that which is written, that Adam heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the evening, and hid himself among the trees of the garden; and when God said, “Adam, where art thou?” replied, “I heard Thy voice, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself from Thy face.” For I do not see how such a walking and conversation of God can be understood literally, except He appeared as a man. For it can neither be said that a voice only of God was framed, when God is said to have walked, or that He who was walking in a place was not visible; while Adam, too, says that he hid himself from the face of God. Who then was He? Whether the Father, or the Son, or the

Holy Spirit? Whether altogether indiscriminately did God the Trinity Himself speak to man in the form of man? The context, indeed, itself of the Scripture nowhere, it should seem, indicates a change from person to person; but He seems still to speak to the first man, who said, "Let there be light," and, "Let there be a firmament," and so on through each of those days; whom we usually take to be God the Father, making by a word whatever He willed to make. For He made all things by His word, which Word we know, by the right rule of faith, to be His only Son. If, therefore, God the Father spake to the first man, and Himself was walking in the garden in the cool of the evening, and if it was from His face that the sinner hid himself amongst the trees of the garden, why are we not to go on to understand that it was He also who appeared to Abraham and to Moses, and to whom He would, and how He would, through the changeable and visible creature, subjected to Himself, while He Himself remains in Himself and in His own substance, in which He is unchangeable and invisible? But, possibly, it might be that the Scripture passed over in a hidden way from person to person, and while it had related that the Father said "Let there be light," and the rest which it mentioned Him to have done by the Word, went on to indicate the Son as speaking to the first man; not unfolding this openly, but intimating it to be understood by those who could understand it.

18. Let him, then, who has the strength whereby he can penetrate this secret with his mind's eye, so that to him it appears clearly, either that the Father also is able, or that only the Son and Holy Spirit are able, to appear to human eyes through a visible creature; let him, I say, proceed to examine these things if he can, or even to express and handle them in words; but the thing itself, so far as concerns this testimony of Scripture, where God spake with man, is, in my judgment, not discoverable, because it does not evidently appear even whether Adam usually saw God with the eyes of his body; especially as it is a great question what manner of eyes it was that were opened when they tasted the forbidden fruit; for before they had tasted, these eyes were closed. Yet I would not rashly assert, even if that scripture implies Paradise to have been a material place, that God could not have walked there in any way except in some bodily form. For it might be said, that only words were framed for the man to hear, without seeing any form. Neither, because it is written, "Adam hid himself from the face of

God,” does it follow forthwith that he usually saw His face. For what if he himself indeed could not see, but feared to be himself seen by Him whose voice he had heard, and had felt His presence as he walked? For Cain, too, said to God, “From Thy face I will hide myself;” yet we are not therefore compelled to admit that he was wont to behold the face of God with his bodily eyes in any visible form, although he had heard the voice of God questioning and speaking with him of his sin. But what manner of speech it was that God then uttered to the outward ears of men, especially in speaking to the first man, it is both difficult to discover, and we have not undertaken to say in this discourse. But if words alone and sounds were wrought, by which to bring about some sensible presence of God to those first men, I do not know why I should not there understand the person of God the Father, seeing that His person is manifested also in that voice, when Jesus appeared in glory on the mount before the three disciples; and in that when the dove descended upon Him at His baptism; and in that where He cried to the Father concerning His own glorification and it was answered Him, “I have both glorified, and will glorify again.” Not that the voice could be wrought without the work of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (since the Trinity works indivisibly), but that such a voice was wrought as to manifest the person of the Father only; just as the Trinity wrought that human form from the Virgin Mary, yet it is the person of the Son alone; for the invisible Trinity wrought the visible person of the Son alone. Neither does anything forbid us, not only to understand those words spoken to Adam as spoken by the Trinity, but also to take them as manifesting the person of that Trinity. For we are compelled to understand of the Father only, that which is said, “This is my beloved Son.” For Jesus can neither be believed nor understood to be the Son of the Holy Spirit, or even His own Son. And where the voice uttered, “I have both glorified, and will glorify again,” we confess it was only the person of the Father; since it is the answer to that word of the Lord, in which He had said, “Father, glorify thy Son,” which He could not say except to God the Father only, and not also to the Holy Spirit, whose Son He was not. But here, where it is written, “And the Lord God said to Adam,” no reason can be given why the Trinity itself should not be understood.

19. Likewise, also, in that which is written, “Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and thy father’s house,” it is not clear whether a voice alone came to the ears of Abraham, or whether anything also appeared to his eyes. But a little while after, it is somewhat more clearly said, “And the Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.” But neither there is it expressly said in what form God appeared to him, or whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit appeared to him. Unless, perhaps, they think that it was the Son who appeared to Abraham, because it is not written, God appeared to him, but “the Lord appeared to him.” For the Son seems to be called the Lord as though the name was appropriated to Him; as e.g. the apostle says, “For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.” But since it is found that God the Father also is called Lord in many places,—for instance, “The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee;” and again, “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand;” since also the Holy Spirit is found to be called Lord, as where the apostle says, “Now the Lord is that Spirit;” and then, lest any one should think the Son to be signified, and to be called the Spirit on account of His incorporeal substance, has gone on to say, “And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;” and no one ever doubted the Spirit of the Lord to be the Holy Spirit: therefore, neither here does it appear plainly whether it was any person of the Trinity that appeared to Abraham, or God Himself the Trinity, of which one God it is said, “Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and Him only shall thou serve.” But under the oak at Mamre he saw three men, whom he invited, and hospitably received, and ministered to them as they feasted. Yet Scripture at the beginning of that narrative does not say, three men appeared to him, but, “The Lord appeared to him.” And then, setting forth in due order after what manner the Lord appeared to him, it has added the account of the three men, whom Abraham invites to his hospitality in the plural number, and afterwards speaks to them in the singular number as one; and as one He promises him a son by Sara, viz. the one whom the Scripture calls Lord, as in the beginning of the same narrative, “The Lord,” it says, “appeared to Abraham.” He invites them then, and washes their feet,

and leads them forth at their departure, as though they were men; but he speaks as with the Lord God, whether when a son is promised to him, or when the destruction is shown to him that was impending over Sodom.

## CHAPTER 11

### OF THE SAME APPEARANCE

20. That place of Scripture demands neither a slight nor a passing consideration. For if one man had appeared, what else would those at once cry out, who say that the Son was visible also in His own substance before He was born of the Virgin, but that it was Himself? since it is said, they say, of the Father, “To the only invisible God.” And yet, I could still go on to demand, in what manner “He was found in fashion as a man,” before He had taken our flesh, seeing that his feet were washed, and that He fed upon earthly food? How could that be, when He was still “in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God?” For, pray, had He already “emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant, and made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man?” when we know when it was that He did this through His birth of the Virgin. How, then, before He had done this, did He appear as one man to Abraham? or, was not that form a reality? I could put these questions, if it had been one man that appeared to Abraham, and if that one were believed to be the Son of God. But since three men appeared, and no one of them is said to be greater than the rest either in form, or age, or power, why should we not here understand, as visibly intimated by the visible creature, the equality of the Trinity, and one and the same substance in three persons?

21. For, lest any one should think that one among the three is in this way intimated to have been the greater, and that this one is to be understood to have been the Lord, the Son of God, while the other two were His angels; because, whereas three appeared, Abraham there speaks to one as the Lord: Holy Scripture has not forgotten to anticipate, by a contradiction, such future cogitations and opinions, when a little while after it says that two angels came to Lot, among whom that just man also, who deserved to be freed from the burning of Sodom, speaks to one as to the Lord. For so

Scripture goes on to say, “And the Lord went His way, as soon as He left communing with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.”

## CHAPTER 12

### THE APPEARANCE TO LOT IS EXAMINED

“But there came two angels to Sodom at even.” Here, what I have begun to set forth must be considered more attentively. Certainly Abraham was speaking with three, and called that one, in the singular number, the Lord. Perhaps, some one may say, he recognized one of the three to be the Lord, but the other two His angels. What, then, does that mean which Scripture goes on to say, “And the Lord went His way, as soon as He had left communing with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place: and there came two angels to Sodom at even?” Are we to suppose that the one who, among the three, was recognized as the Lord, had departed, and had sent the two angels that were with Him to destroy Sodom? Let us see, then, what follows. “There came,” it is said, “two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them, rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; and he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant’s house.” Here it is clear, both that there were two angels, and that in the plural number they were invited to partake of hospitality, and that they were honorably designated lords, when they perchance were thought to be men.

22. Yet, again, it is objected that except they were known to be angels of God, Lot would not have bowed himself with his face to the ground. Why, then, is both hospitality and food offered to them, as though they wanted such human succor? But whatever may here lie hid, let us now pursue that which we have undertaken. Two appear; both are called angels; they are invited plurally; he speaks as with two plurally, until the departure from Sodom. And then Scripture goes on to say, “And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that they said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, and there thou shalt be saved, lest thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them, Oh! not so, my lord: behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight,” etc. What is meant by his saying to them, “Oh! not so, my lord,” if He who

was the Lord had already departed, and had sent the angels? Why is it said, “Oh! not so, my lord,” and not, “Oh! not so, my lords?” Or if he wished to speak to one of them, why does Scripture say, “But Lot said to them, Oh! not so, my lord: behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight,” etc.? Are we here, too, to understand two persons in the plural number, but when the two are addressed as one, then the one Lord God of one substance? But which two persons do we here understand?—of the Father and of the Son, or of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, or of the Son and of the Holy Spirit? The last, perhaps, is the more suitable; for they said of themselves that they were sent, which is that which we say of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. For we find nowhere in the Scriptures that the Father was sent.

## CHAPTER 13

### THE APPEARANCE IN THE BUSH

23. But when Moses was sent to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, it is written that the Lord appeared to him thus: “Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” He is here also first called the Angel of the Lord, and then God. Was an angel, then, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? Therefore He may be rightly understood to be the Saviour Himself, of whom the apostle says, “Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” He, therefore, “who is over all, God blessed for ever,” is not unreasonably here understood also to be Himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. But why is He previously called the Angel of the Lord, when He appeared in a flame of fire out of the bush? Was it because it was one of many angels, who by an economy [or



arrangement] bare the person of his Lord? or was something of the creature assumed by Him in order to bring about a visible appearance for the business in hand, and that words might thence be audibly uttered, whereby the presence of the Lord might be shown, in such way as was fitting, to the corporeal senses of man, by means of the creature made subject? For if he was one of the angels, who could easily affirm whether it was the person of the Son which was imposed upon him to announce, or that of the Holy Spirit, or that of God the Father, or altogether of the Trinity itself, who is the one and only God, in order that he might say, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?” For we cannot say that the Son of God is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and that the Father is not; nor will any one dare to deny that either the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity itself, whom we believe and understand to be the one God, is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he who is not God, is not the God of those fathers. Furthermore, if not only the Father is God, as all, even heretics, admit; but also the Son, which, whether they will or not, they are compelled to acknowledge, since the apostle says, “Who is over all, God blessed for ever;” and the Holy Spirit, since the same apostle says, “Therefore glorify God in your body;” when he had said above, “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?” and these three are one God, as catholic soundness believes: it is not sufficiently apparent which person of the Trinity that angel bare, if he was one of the rest of the angels, and whether any person, and not rather that of the Trinity itself. But if the creature was assumed for the purpose of the business in hand, whereby both to appear to human eyes, and to sound in human ears, and to be called the Angel of the Lord, and the Lord, and God; then cannot God here be understood to be the Father, but either the Son or the Holy Spirit. Although I cannot call to mind that the Holy Spirit is anywhere else called an angel, which yet may be understood from His work; for it is said of Him, “And He will show you things to come;” and “angel” in Greek is certainly equivalent to “messenger” in Latin: but we read most evidently of the Lord Jesus Christ in the prophet, that He is called “the Angel of Great Counsel,” while both the Holy Spirit and the Son of God is God and Lord of the angels.

## CHAPTER 14

### OF THE APPEARANCE IN THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE

24. Also in the going forth of the children of Israel from Egypt it is written, “And the Lord went before them, by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.” Who here, too, would doubt that God appeared to the eyes of mortal men by the corporeal creature made subject to Him, and not by His own substance? But it is not similarly apparent whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity itself, the one God. Nor is this distinguished there either, in my judgment, where it is written, “The glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud, and the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel,” etc.

## CHAPTER 15

### OF THE APPEARANCE ON SINAI. WHETHER THE TRINITY SPAKE IN THAT APPEARANCE OR SOME ONE PERSON SPECIALLY

25. But now of the clouds, and voices, and lightnings, and the trumpet, and the smoke on Mount Sinai, when it was said, “And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace; and all the people that was in the camp trembled; and when the voice of the trumpet sounded long and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.” And a little after, when the Law had been given in the ten commandments, it follows in the text, “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking.” And a little after, “And [when the people saw it,] they removed and stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was, and the Lord said unto Moses,” etc. What shall I say about this, save that no one can be so insane as to believe the smoke, and the fire, and the cloud, and the darkness, and whatever there was of the kind, to be the substance of the word and wisdom of God which is Christ, or of the Holy Spirit? For not even the Arians ever dared to say that they were the substance of God the Father. All these things, then, were wrought through

the creature serving the Creator, and were presented in a suitable economy (dispensatio) to human senses; unless, perhaps, because it is said, “And Moses drew near to the cloud where God was,” carnal thoughts must needs suppose that the cloud was indeed seen by the people, but that within the cloud Moses with the eyes of the flesh saw the Son of God, whom dotting heretics will have to be seen in His own substance. Forsooth, Moses may have seen Him with the eyes of the flesh, if not only the wisdom of God which is Christ, but even that of any man you please and howsoever wise, can be seen with the eyes of the flesh; or if, because it is written of the elders of Israel, that “they saw the place where the God of Israel had stood,” and that “there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness,” therefore we are to believe that the word and wisdom of God in His own substance stood within the space of an earthly place, who indeed “reacheth firmly from end to end, and sweetly ordereth all things;” and that the Word of God, by whom all things were made, is in such wise changeable, as now to contract, now to expand Himself; (may the Lord cleanse the hearts of His faithful ones from such thoughts!) But indeed all these visible and sensible things are, as we have often said, exhibited through the creature made subject in order to signify the invisible and intelligible God, not only the Father, but also the Son and the Holy Spirit, “of whom are all things, and through whom are all things, and in whom are all things;” although “the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.”

26. But as far as concerns our present undertaking, neither on Mount Sinai do I see how it appears, by all those things which were fearfully displayed to the senses of mortal men, whether God the Trinity spake, or the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit severally. But if it is allowable, without rash assertion, to venture upon a modest and hesitating conjecture from this passage, if it is possible to understand it of one person of the Trinity, why do we not rather understand the Holy Spirit to be spoken of, since the Law itself also, which was given there, is said to have been written upon tables of stone with the finger of God, by which name we know the Holy Spirit to be signified in the Gospel. And fifty days are numbered from the slaying of

the lamb and the celebration of the Passover until the day in which these things began to be done in Mount Sinai; just as after the passion of our Lord fifty days are numbered from His resurrection, and then came the Holy Spirit which the Son of God had promised. And in that very coming of His, which we read of in the Acts of the Apostles, there appeared cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: which agrees with Exodus, where it is written, “And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire;” and a little after, “And the sight of the glory of the Lord,” he says, “was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.” Or if these things were therefore wrought because neither the Father nor the Son could be there presented in that mode without the Holy Spirit, by whom the Law itself must needs be written; then we know doubtless that God appeared there, not by His own substance, which remains invisible and unchangeable, but by the appearance above mentioned of the creature; but that some special person of the Trinity appeared, distinguished by a proper mark, as far as my capacity of understanding reaches, we do not see.

## CHAPTER 16

### IN WHAT MANNER MOSES SAW GOD

26. There is yet another difficulty which troubles most people, viz. that it is written, “And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend;” whereas a little after, the same Moses says, “Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thyself plainly, that I may see Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight, and that I may consider that this nation is Thy people;” and a little after Moses again said to the Lord, “Show me Thy glory.” What means this then, that in everything which was done, as above said, God was thought to have appeared by His own substance; whence the Son of God has been believed by these miserable people to be visible not by the creature, but by Himself; and that Moses, entering into the cloud, appeared to have had this very object in entering, that a cloudy darkness indeed might be shown to the eyes of the people, but that Moses within might hear the words of God, as though he beheld His face; and, as it is said, “And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend;” and yet, behold, the

same Moses says, “If I have found grace in Thy sight, show me Thyself plainly?” Assuredly he knew that he saw corporeally, and he sought the true sight of God spiritually. And that mode of speech accordingly which was wrought in words, was so modified, as if it were of a friend speaking to a friend. Yet who sees God the Father with the eyes of the body? And that Word, which was in the beginning, the Word which was with God, the Word which was God, by which all things were made,—who sees Him with the eyes of the body? And the spirit of wisdom, again, who sees with the eyes of the body? Yet what is, “Show me now Thyself plainly, that I may see Thee,” unless, Show me Thy substance? But if Moses had not said this, we must indeed have borne with those foolish people as we could, who think that the substance of God was made visible to his eyes through those things which, as above mentioned, were said or done. But when it is here demonstrated most evidently that this was not granted to him, even though he desired it; who will dare to say, that by the like forms which had appeared visibly to him also, not the creature serving God, but that itself which is God, appeared to the eyes of a mortal man?

28. Add, too, that which the Lord afterward said to Moses, “Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see my face, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee into a watch-tower of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen.”

## CHAPTER 17

HOW THE BACK PARTS OF GOD WERE SEEN. THE FAITH OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ONLY IS THE PLACE FROM WHENCE THE BACK PARTS OF GOD ARE SEEN. THE BACK PARTS OF GOD WERE SEEN BY THE ISRAELITES. IT IS A RASH OPINION TO THINK THAT GOD THE FATHER ONLY WAS NEVER SEEN BY THE FATHERS

Not unfitly is it commonly understood to be prefigured from the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, that His “back parts” are to be taken to be His flesh, in which He was born of the Virgin, and died, and rose again; whether they are called back parts on account of the posteriority of mortality, or because

it was almost in the end of the world, that is, at a late period, that He deigned to take it: but that His “face” was that form of God, in which He “thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” which no one certainly can see and live; whether because after this life, in which we are absent from the Lord, and where the corruptible body presseth down the soul, we shall see “face to face,” as the apostle says—(for it is said in the Psalms, of this life, “Verily every man living is altogether vanity;” and again, “For in Thy sight shall no man living be justified;” and in this life also, according to John, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know,” he says, “that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is,” which he certainly intended to be understood as after this life, when we shall have paid the debt of death, and shall have received the promise of the resurrection);—or whether that even now, in whatever degree we spiritually understand the wisdom of God, by which all things were made, in that same degree we die to carnal affections, so that, considering this world dead to us, we also ourselves die to this world, and say what the apostle says, “The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” For it was of this death that he also says, “Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?” Not therefore without cause will no one be able to see the “face,” that is, the manifestation itself of the wisdom of God, and live. For it is this very appearance, for the contemplation of which every one sighs who strives to love God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind; to the contemplation of which, he who loves his neighbor, too, as himself builds up his neighbor also as far as he may; on which two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. And this is signified also in Moses himself. For when he had said, on account of the love of God with which he was specially inflamed, “If I have found grace in thy sight, show me now Thyself plainly, that I may find grace in Thy sight;” he immediately subjoined, on account of the love also of his neighbor, “And that I may know that this nation is Thy people.” It is therefore that “appearance” which hurries away every rational soul with the desire of it, and the more ardently the more pure that soul is; and it is the more pure the more it rises to spiritual things; and it rises the more to spiritual things the more it dies to carnal things. But whilst we are absent from the Lord, and walk by faith, not by sight, we ought to see the “back parts” of Christ, that is His flesh, by that very faith, that is, standing on the

solid foundation of faith, which the rock signifies, and beholding it from such a safe watch-tower, namely in the Catholic Church, of which it is said, “And upon this rock I will build my Church.” For so much the more certainly we love that face of Christ, which we earnestly desire to see, as we recognize in His back parts how much first Christ loved us.

29. But in the flesh itself, the faith in His resurrection saves and justifies us. For, “If thou shalt believe,” he says, “in thine heart, that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved;” and again, “Who was delivered,” he says, “for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” So that the reward of our faith is the resurrection of the body of our Lord. For even His enemies believe that that flesh died on the cross of His passion, but they do not believe it to have risen again. Which we believing most firmly, gaze upon it as from the solidity of a rock: whence we wait with certain hope for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; because we hope for that in the members of Christ, that is, in ourselves, which by a sound faith we acknowledge to be perfect in Him as in our Head. Thence it is that He would not have His back parts seen, unless as He passed by, that His resurrection may be believed. For that which is Pascha in Hebrew, is translated Passover. Whence John the Evangelist also says, “Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come, that He should pass out of this world unto the Father.”

30. But they who believe this, but believe it not in the Catholic Church, but in some schism or in heresy, do not see the back parts of the Lord from “the place that is by Him.” For what does that mean which the Lord says, “Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock?” What earthly place is “by” the Lord, unless that is “by Him” which touches Him spiritually? For what place is not “by” the Lord, who “reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth order all things,” and of whom it is said, “Heaven is His throne, and earth is His footstool;” and who said, “Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest? For has not my hand made all those things?” But manifestly the Catholic Church itself is understood to be “the place by Him,” wherein one stands upon a rock, where he healthfully sees the “Pascha Domini,” that is, the “Passing by” of the Lord, and His back parts, that is, His body, who

believes in His resurrection. "And thou shalt stand," He says, "upon a rock while my glory passeth by." For in reality, immediately after the majesty of the Lord had passed by in the glorification of the Lord, in which He rose again and ascended to the Father, we stood firm upon the rock. And Peter himself then stood firm, so that he preached Him with confidence, whom, before he stood firm, he had thrice from fear denied; although, indeed, already before placed in predestination upon the watch-tower of the rock, but with the hand of the Lord still held over him that he might not see. For he was to see His back parts, and the Lord had not yet "passed by," namely, from death to life; He had not yet been glorified by the resurrection.

31. For as to that, too, which follows in Exodus, "I will cover thee with mine hand while I pass by, and I will take away my hand and thou shalt see my back parts;" many Israelites, of whom Moses was then a figure, believed in the Lord after His resurrection, as if His hand had been taken off from their eyes, and they now saw His back parts. And hence the evangelist also mentions that prophesy of Isaiah, "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes." Lastly, in the Psalm, that is not unreasonably understood to be said in their person, "For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me." "By day," perhaps, when He performed manifest miracles, yet was not acknowledged by them; but "by night," when He died in suffering, when they thought still more certainly that, like any one among men, He was cut off and brought to an end. But since, when He had already passed by, so that His back parts were seen, upon the preaching to them by the Apostle Peter that it behoved Christ to suffer and rise again, they were pricked in their hearts with the grief of repentance, that that might come to pass among the baptized which is said in the beginning of that Psalm, "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;" therefore, after it had been said, "Thy hand is heavy upon me," the Lord, as it were, passing by, so that now He removed His hand, and His back parts were seen, there follows the voice of one who grieves and confesses and receives remission of sins by faith in the resurrection of the Lord: "My moisture," he says, "is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." For we ought not to be so wrapped



up in the darkness of the flesh, as to think the face indeed of God to be invisible, but His back visible, since both appeared visibly in the form of a servant; but far be it from us to think anything of the kind in the form of God; far be it from us to think that the Word of God and the Wisdom of God has a face on one side, and on the other a back, as a human body has, or is at all changed either in place or time by any appearance or motion.

32. Wherefore, if in those words which were spoken in Exodus, and in all those corporeal appearances, the Lord Jesus Christ was manifested; or if in some cases Christ was manifested, as the consideration of this passage persuades us, in others the Holy Spirit, as that which we have said above admonishes us; at any rate no such result follows, as that God the Father never appeared in any such form to the Fathers. For many such appearances happened in those times, without either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit being expressly named and designated in them; but yet with some intimations given through certain very probable interpretations, so that it would be too rash to say that God the Father never appeared by any visible forms to the fathers or the prophets. For they gave birth to this opinion who were not able to understand in respect to the unity of the Trinity such texts as, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God;” and, “Whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” Which texts are understood by a sound faith in that substance itself, the highest, and in the highest degree divine and unchangeable, whereby both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit is the one and only God. But those visions were wrought through the changeable creature, made subject to the unchangeable God, and did not manifest God properly as He is, but by intimations such as suited the causes and times of the several circumstances.

## CHAPTER 18

### THE VISION OF DANIEL

33. I do not know in what manner these men understand that the Ancient of Days appeared to Daniel, from whom the Son of man, which He deigned to be for our sakes, is understood to have received the kingdom; namely, from Him who says to Him in the Psalms, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee; ask of me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine

inheritance;” and who has “put all things under His feet.” If, however, both the Father giving the kingdom, and the Son receiving it, appeared to Daniel in bodily form, how can those men say that the Father never appeared to the prophets, and, therefore, that He only ought to be understood to be invisible whom no man has seen, nor can see? For Daniel has told us thus: “I beheld,” he says, “till the thrones were set, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened,” etc. And a little after, “I saw,” he says, “in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Behold the Father giving, and the Son receiving, an eternal kingdom; and both are in the sight of him who prophesies, in a visible form. It is not, therefore, unsuitably believed that God the Father also was wont to appear in that manner to mortals.

34. Unless, perhaps, some one shall say, that the Father is therefore not visible, because He appeared within the sight of one who was dreaming; but that therefore the Son and the Holy Spirit are visible, because Moses saw all those things being awake; as if, forsooth, Moses saw the Word and the Wisdom of God with fleshly eyes, or that even the human spirit which quickens that flesh can be seen, or even that corporeal thing which is called wind;—how much less can that Spirit of God be seen, who transcends the minds of all men, and of angels, by the ineffable excellence of the divine substance? Or can any one fall headlong into such an error as to dare to say, that the Son and the Holy Spirit are visible also to men who are awake, but that the Father is not visible except to those who dream? How, then, do they understand that of the Father alone, “Whom no man hath seen, nor can see.”? When men sleep, are they then not men? Or cannot He, who can fashion the likeness of a body to signify Himself through the visions of

dreamers, also fashion that same bodily creature to signify Himself to the eyes of those who are awake? Whereas His own very substance, whereby He Himself is that which He is, cannot be shown by any bodily likeness to one who sleeps, or by any bodily appearance to one who is awake; but this not of the Father only, but also of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And certainly, as to those who are moved by the visions of waking men to believe that not the Father, but only the Son, or the Holy Spirit, appeared to the corporeal sight of men,—to omit the great extent of the sacred pages, and their manifold interpretation, such that no one of sound reason ought to affirm that the person of the Father was nowhere shown to the eyes of waking men by any corporeal appearance;—but, as I said, to omit this, what do they say of our father Abraham, who was certainly awake and ministering, when, after Scripture had premised, “The Lord appeared unto Abraham,” not one, or two, but three men appeared to him; no one of whom is said to have stood prominently above the others, no one more than the others to have shone with greater glory, or to have acted more authoritatively?

35. Wherefore, since in that our threefold division we determined to inquire, first, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; or whether sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Holy Spirit; or whether, without any distinction of persons, as it is said, the one and only God, that is, the Trinity itself, appeared to the fathers through those forms of the creature: now that we have examined, so far as appeared to be sufficient what places of the Holy Scriptures we could, a modest and cautious consideration of divine mysteries leads, as far as I can judge, to no other conclusion, unless that we may not rashly affirm which person of the Trinity appeared to this or that of the fathers or the prophets in some body or likeness of body, unless when the context attaches to the narrative some probable intimations on the subject. For the nature itself, or substance, or essence, or by whatever other name that very thing, which is God, whatever it be, is to be called, cannot be seen corporeally: but we must believe that by means of the creature made subject to Him, not only the Son, or the Holy Spirit, but also the Father, may have given intimations of Himself to mortal senses by a corporeal form or likeness. And since the case stands thus, that

this second book may not extend to an immoderate length, let us consider what remains in those which follow.

# Book III

The question is discussed with respect to the appearances of God spoken of in the previous book, which were made under bodily forms, whether only a creature was formed, for the purpose of manifesting God to human sight in such way as He at each time judged fitting; or whether angels, already existing, were so sent as to speak in the person of God; and this, either by assuming a bodily appearance from the bodily creature, or by changing their own bodies into whatever forms they would, suitable to the particular action, according to the power given to them by the Creator; while the essence itself of God was never seen in itself.

## PREFACE

WHY AUGUSTIN WRITES OF THE TRINITY. WHAT HE CLAIMS FROM READERS. WHAT HAS BEEN SAID IN THE PREVIOUS BOOK

1. I Would have them believe, who are willing to do so, that I had rather bestow labor in reading, than in dictating what others may read. But let those who will not believe this, but are both able and willing to make the trial, grant me whatever answers may be gathered from reading, either to my own inquiries, or to those interrogations of others, which for the character I bear in the service of Christ, and for the zeal with which I burn that our faith may be fortified against the error of carnal and natural men, I must needs bear with; and then let them see how easily I would refrain from this labor, and with how much even of joy I would give my pen a holiday. But if what we have read upon these subjects is either not sufficiently set forth, or is not to be found at all, or at any rate cannot easily be found by us, in the Latin tongue, while we are not so familiar with the Greek tongue as to be found in any way competent to read and understand therein the books that treat of such topics, in which class of writings, to judge by the little which has been translated for us, I do not doubt that everything is contained

that we can profitably seek; while yet I cannot resist my brethren when they exact of me, by that law by which I am made their servant, that I should minister above all to their praiseworthy studies in Christ by my tongue and by my pen, of which two yoked together in me, Love is the charioteer; and while I myself confess that I have by writing learned many things which I did not know: if this be so, then this my labor ought not to seem superfluous to any idle, or to any very learned reader; while it is needful in no small part, to many who are busy, and to many who are unlearned, and among these last to myself. Supported, then, very greatly, and aided by the writings we have already read of others on this subject, I have undertaken to inquire into and to discuss, whatever it seems to my judgment can be reverently inquired into and discussed, concerning the Trinity, the one supreme and supremely good God; He himself exhorting me to the inquiry, and helping me in the discussion of it; in order that, if there are no other writings of the kind, there may be something for those to have and read who are willing and capable; but if any exist already, then it may be so much the easier to find some such writings, the more there are of the kind in existence.

2. Assuredly, as in all my writings I desire not only a pious reader, but also a free corrector, so I especially desire this in the present inquiry, which is so important that I would there were as many inquirers as there are objectors. But as I do not wish my reader to be bound down to me, so I do not wish my corrector to be bound down to himself. Let not the former love me more than the catholic faith, let not the latter love himself more than the catholic verity. As I say to the former, Do not be willing to yield to my writings as to the canonical Scriptures; but in these, when thou hast discovered even what thou didst not previously believe, believe it unhesitatingly; while in those, unless thou hast understood with certainty what thou didst not before hold as certain, be unwilling to hold it fast: so I say to the latter, Do not be willing to amend my writings by thine own opinion or disputation, but from the divine text, or by unanswerable reason. If thou apprehendest anything of truth in them, its being there does not make it mine, but by understanding and loving it, let it be both thine and mine; but if thou convictest anything of falsehood, though it have once been mine, in that I was guilty of the error, yet now by avoiding it let it be neither thine nor mine.

3. Let this third book, then, take its beginning at the point to which the second had reached. For after we had arrived at this, that we desired to show that the Son was not therefore less than the Father, because the Father sent and the Son was sent; nor the Holy Spirit therefore less than both, because we read in the Gospel that He was sent both by the one and by the other; we undertook then to inquire, since the Son was sent thither, where He already was, for He came into the world, and “was in the world;” since also the Holy Spirit was sent thither, where He already was, for “the Spirit of the Lord filleth the world, and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice;” whether the Lord was therefore “sent” because He was born in the flesh so as to be no longer hidden, and, as it were, came forth from the bosom of the Father, and appeared to the eyes of men in the form of a servant; and the Holy Spirit also was therefore “sent,” because He too was seen as a dove in a corporeal form, and in cloven tongues, like as of fire; so that, to be sent, when spoken of them, means to go forth to the sight of mortals in some corporeal form from a spiritual hiding-place; which, because the Father did not, He is said only to have sent, not also to be sent. Our next inquiry was, Why the Father also is not sometimes said to be sent, if He Himself was manifested through those corporeal forms which appeared to the eyes of the ancients. But if the Son was manifested at these times, why should He be said to be “sent” so long after, when the fullness of time was come that He should be born of a woman; since, indeed, He was sent before also, viz., when He appeared corporeally in those forms? Or if He were not rightly said to be “sent,” except when the Word was made flesh; why should the Holy Spirit be read of as “sent,” of whom such an incarnation never took place? But if neither the Father, nor the Son, but the Holy Spirit was manifested through these ancient appearances; why should He too be said to be “sent” now, when He was also sent before in these various manners? Next we subdivided the subject, that it might be handled most carefully, and we made the question threefold, of which one part was explained in the second book, and two remain, which I shall next proceed to discuss. For we have already inquired and determined, that not only the Father, nor only the Son, nor only the Holy Spirit appeared in those ancient corporeal forms and visions, but either indifferently the Lord God, who is understood to be the Trinity itself, or some one person of the Trinity,

whichever the text of the narrative might signify, through intimations supplied by the context.

## CHAPTER 1

### WHAT IS TO BE SAID THEREUPON

4. Let us, then, continue our inquiry now in order. For under the second head in that division the question occurred, whether the creature was formed for that work only, wherein God, in such way as He then judged it to be fitting, might be manifested to human sight; or whether angels, who already existed, were so sent as to speak in the person of God, assuming a corporeal appearance from the corporeal creature for the purpose of their ministry; or else changing and turning their own body itself, to which they are not subject, but govern it as subject to themselves, into whatever forms they would, that were appropriate and fit for their actions, according to the power given to them by the Creator. And when this part of the question shall have been investigated, so far as God permit, then, lastly, we shall have to see to that question with which we started, viz., whether the Son and the Holy Spirit were also “sent” before; and if it be so, then what difference there is between that sending and the one of which we read in the Gospel; or whether neither of them were sent, except when either the Son was made of the Virgin Mary, or when the Holy Spirit appeared in a visible form, whether as a dove or in tongues of fire.

5. I confess, however, that it reaches further than my purpose can carry me to inquire whether the angels, secretly working by the spiritual quality of their body abiding still in them, assume somewhat from the inferior and more bodily elements, which, being fitted to themselves, they may change and turn like a garment into any corporeal appearances they will, and those appearances themselves also real, as real water was changed by our Lord into real wine; or whether they transform their own bodies themselves into that which they would, suitably to the particular act. But it does not signify to the present question which of these it is. And although I be not able to understand these things by actual experience, seeing that I am a man, as the angels do who do these things, and know them better than I know them, viz., how far my body is changeable by the operation of my will; whether it



be by my own experience of myself, or by that which I have gathered from others; yet it is not necessary here to say which of these alternatives I am to believe upon the authority of the divine Scriptures, lest I be compelled to prove it, and so my discourse become too long upon a subject which does not concern the present question.

6. Our present inquiry then is, whether the angels were then the agents both in showing those bodily appearances to the eyes of men and in sounding those words in their ears when the sensible creature itself, serving the Creator at His beck, was turned for the time into whatever was needful; as it is written in the book of Wisdom, “For the creature serveth Thee, who art the Maker, increaseth his strength against the unrighteous for their punishment, and abateth his strength for the benefit of such as put their trust in Thee. Therefore, even then was it altered into all fashions, and was obedient to Thy grace, that nourisheth all things according to the desire of them that longed for Thee.” For the power of the will of God reaches through the spiritual creature even to visible and sensible effects of the corporeal creature. For where does not the wisdom of the omnipotent God work that which He wills, which “reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth order all things”?

## CHAPTER 2

THE WILL OF GOD IS THE HIGHER CAUSE OF ALL CORPOREAL CHANGE. THIS IS SHOWN BY AN EXAMPLE

7. But there is one kind of natural order in the conversion and changeableness of bodies, which, although itself also serves the bidding of God, yet by reason of its unbroken continuity has ceased to cause wonder; as is the case, for instance, with those things which are changed either in very short, or at any rate not long, intervals of time, in heaven, or earth, or sea; whether it be in rising, or in setting, or in change of appearance from time to time; while there are other things, which, although arising from that same order, yet are less familiar on account of longer intervals of time. And these things, although the many stupidly wonder at them, yet are understood by those who inquire into this present world, and in the progress of generations become so much the less wonderful, as they are the more often

repeated and known by more people. Such are the eclipses of the sun and moon, and some kinds of stars, appearing seldom, and earthquakes, and unnatural births of living creatures, and other similar things; of which not one takes place without the will of God; yet, that it is so, is to most people not apparent. And so the vanity of philosophers has found license to assign these things also to other causes, true causes perhaps, but proximate ones, while they are not able to see at all the cause that is higher than all others, that is, the will of God; or again to false causes, and to such as are not even put forward out of any diligent investigation of corporeal things and motions, but from their own guess and error.

8. I will bring forward an example, if I can, that this may be plainer. There is, we know, in the human body, a certain bulk of flesh and an outward form, and an arrangement and distraction of limbs, and a temperament of health; and a soul breathed into it governs this body, and that soul a rational one; which, therefore, although changeable, yet can be partaker of that unchangeable wisdom, so that “it may partake of that which is in and of itself;” as it is written in the Psalm concerning all saints, of whom as of living stones is built that Jerusalem which is the mother of us all, eternal in the heavens. For so it is sung, “Jerusalem is builded as a city, that is partaker of that which is in and of itself.” For “in and of itself,” in that place, is understood of that chiefest and unchangeable good, which is God, and of His own wisdom and will. To whom is sung in another place, “Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same.”

### CHAPTER 3

#### OF THE SAME ARGUMENT

Let us take, then, the case of a wise man, such that his rational soul is already partaker of the unchangeable and eternal truth, so that he consults it about all his actions, nor does anything at all, which he does not by it know ought to be done, in order that by being subject to it and obeying it he may do rightly. Suppose now that this man, upon counsel with the highest reason of the divine righteousness, which he hears with the ear of his heart in secret, and by its bidding, should weary his body by toil in some office of mercy, and should contract an illness; and upon consulting the physicians,

were to be told by one that the cause of the disease was overmuch dryness of the body, but by another that it was overmuch moisture; one of the two no doubt would allege the true cause and the other would err, but both would pronounce concerning proximate causes only, that is, corporeal ones. But if the cause of that dryness were to be inquired into, and found to be the self-imposed toil, then we should have come to a yet higher cause, which proceeds from the soul so as to affect the body which the soul governs. Yet neither would this be the first cause, for that doubtless was a higher cause still, and lay in the unchangeable wisdom itself, by serving which in love, and by obeying its ineffable commands, the soul of the wise man had undertaken that self-imposed toil; and so nothing else but the will of God would be found most truly to be the first cause of that illness. But suppose now in that office of pious toil this wise man had employed the help of others to co-operate in the good work, who did not serve God with the same will as himself, but either desired to attain the reward of their own carnal desires, or shunned merely carnal unpleasantnesses;—suppose, too, he had employed beasts of burden, if the completion of the work required such a provision, which beasts of burden would be certainly irrational animals, and would not therefore move their limbs under their burdens because they at all thought of that good work, but from the natural appetite of their own liking, and for the avoiding of annoyance;—suppose, lastly, he had employed bodily things themselves that lack all sense, but were necessary for that work, as e.g. corn, and wine, and oils, clothes, or money, or a book, or anything of the kind;—certainly, in all these bodily things thus employed in this work, whether animate or inanimate, whatever took place of movement, of wear and tear, of reparation, of destruction, of renewal or of change in one way or another, as places and times affected them; pray, could there be, I say, any other cause of all these visible and changeable facts, except the invisible and unchangeable will of God, using all these, both bad and irrational souls, and lastly bodies, whether such as were inspired and animated by those souls, or such as lacked all sense, by means of that upright soul as the seat of His wisdom, since primarily that good and holy soul itself employed them, which His wisdom had subjected to itself in a pious and religious obedience?

## CHAPTER 4

### GOD USES ALL CREATURES AS HE WILL, AND MAKES VISIBLE THINGS FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF HIMSELF

9. What, then, we have alleged by way of example of a single wise man, although of one still bearing a mortal body and still seeing only in part, may be allowably extended also to a family, where there is a society of such men, or to a city, or even to the whole world, if the chief rule and government of human affairs were in the hands of the wise, and of those who were piously and perfectly subject to God; but because this is not the case as yet (for it behoves us first to be exercised in this our pilgrimage after mortal fashion, and to be taught with stripes by force of gentleness and patience), let us turn our thoughts to that country itself that is above and heavenly, from which we here are pilgrims. For there the will of God, “who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire,” presiding among spirits which are joined in perfect peace and friendship, and combined in one will by a kind of spiritual fire of charity, as it were in an elevated and holy and secret seat, as in its own house and in its own temple, thence diffuses itself through all things by certain most perfectly ordered movements of the creature; first spiritual, then corporeal; and uses all according to the unchangeable pleasure of its own purpose, whether incorporeal things or things corporeal, whether rational or irrational spirits, whether good by His grace or evil through their own will. But as the more gross and inferior bodies are governed in due order by the more subtle and powerful ones, so all bodies are governed by the living spirit; and the living spirit devoid of reason, by the reasonable living spirit; and the reasonable living spirit that makes default and sins, by the living and reasonable spirit that is pious and just; and that by God Himself, and so the universal creature by its Creator, from whom and through whom and in whom it is also created and established. And so it comes to pass that the will of God is the first and the highest cause of all corporeal appearances and motions. For nothing is done visibly or sensibly, unless either by command or permission from the interior palace, invisible and intelligible, of the supreme Governor, according to the unspeakable justice of rewards and punishments, of favor and retribution, in that far-reaching and boundless commonwealth of the whole creature.

10. If, therefore, the Apostle Paul, although he still bare the burden of the body, which is subject to corruption and presseth down the soul, and although he still saw only in part and in an enigma, wishing to depart and be with Christ, and groaning within himself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of his body, yet was able to preach the Lord Jesus Christ significantly, in one way by his tongue, in another by epistle, in another by the sacrament of His body and blood (since, certainly, we do not call either the tongue of the apostle, or the parchments, or the ink, or the significant sounds which his tongue uttered, or the alphabetical signs written on skins, the body and blood of Christ; but that only which we take of the fruits of the earth and consecrate by mystic prayer, and then receive duly to our spiritual health in memory of the passion of our Lord for us: and this, although it is brought by the hands of men to that visible form, yet is not sanctified to become so great a sacrament, except by the spirit of God working invisibly; since God works everything that is done in that work through corporeal movements, by setting in motion primarily the invisible things of His servants, whether the souls of men, or the services of hidden spirits subject to Himself): what wonder if also in the creature of heaven and earth, of sea and air, God works the sensible and visible things which He wills, in order to signify and manifest Himself in them, as He Himself knows it to be fitting, without any appearing of His very substance itself, whereby He is, which is altogether unchangeable, and more inwardly and secretly exalted than all spirits whom He has created?

## CHAPTER 5

### WHY MIRACLES ARE NOT USUAL WORKS

11. For since the divine power administers the whole spiritual and corporeal creature, the waters of the sea are summoned and poured out upon the face of the earth on certain days of every year. But when this was done at the prayer of the holy Elijah; because so continued and long a course of fair weather had gone before, that men were famished; and because at that very hour, in which the servant of God prayed, the air itself had not, by any moist aspect, put forth signs of the coming rain; the divine power was apparent in the great and rapid showers that followed, and by which that miracle was granted and dispensed. In like manner, God works ordinarily

through thunders and lightnings: but because these were wrought in an unusual manner on Mount Sinai, and those sounds were not uttered with a confused noise, but so that it appeared by most sure proofs that certain intimations were given by them, they were miracles. Who draws up the sap through the root of the vine to the bunch of grapes, and makes the wine, except God; who, while man plants and waters, Himself giveth the increase? But when, at the command of the Lord, the water was turned into wine with an extraordinary quickness, the divine power was made manifest, by the confession even of the foolish. Who ordinarily clothes the trees with leaves and flowers except God? Yet, when the rod of Aaron the priest blossomed, the Godhead in some way conversed with doubting humanity. Again, the earthy matter certainly serves in common to the production and formation both of all kinds of wood and of the flesh of all animals: and who makes these things, but He who said, Let the earth bring them forth; and who governs and guides by the same word of His, those things which He has created? Yet, when He changed the same matter out of the rod of Moses into the flesh of a serpent, immediately and quickly, that change, which was unusual, although of a thing which was changeable, was a miracle. But who is it that gives life to every living thing at its birth, unless He who gave life to that serpent also for the moment, as there was need.

## CHAPTER 6

### DIVERSITY ALONE MAKES A MIRACLE

And who is it that restored to the corpses their proper souls when the dead rose again, unless He who gives life to the flesh in the mother's womb, in order that they may come into being who yet are to die? But when such things happen in a continuous kind of river of ever-flowing succession, passing from the hidden to the visible, and from the visible to the hidden, by a regular and beaten track, then they are called natural; when, for the admonition of men, they are thrust in by an unusual changeableness, then they are called miracles.

## CHAPTER 7

### GREAT MIRACLES WROUGHT BY MAGIC ARTS

12. I see here what may occur to a weak judgment, namely, why such miracles are wrought also by magic arts; for the wise men of Pharaoh likewise made serpents, and did other like things. Yet it is still more a matter of wonder, how it was that the power of those magicians, which was able to make serpents, when it came to very small flies, failed altogether. For the lice, by which third plague the proud people of Egypt were smitten, are very short-lived little flies; yet there certainly the magicians failed, saying, “This is the finger of God.” And hence it is given us to understand that not even those angels and powers of the air that transgressed, who have been thrust down into that lowest darkness, as into a peculiar prison, from their habitation in that lofty ethereal purity, through whom magic arts have whatever power they have, can do anything except by power given from above. Now that power is given either to deceive the deceitful, as it was given against the Egyptians, and against the magicians also themselves, in order that in the seducing of those spirits they might seem admirable by whom they were wrought, but to be condemned by the truth of God; or for the admonishing of the faithful, lest they should desire to do anything of the kind as though it were a great thing, for which reason they have been handed down to us also by the authority of Scripture; or lastly, for the exercising, proving, and manifesting of the patience of the righteous. For it was not by any small power of visible miracles that Job lost all that he had, and both his children and his bodily health itself.

## CHAPTER 8

### GOD ALONE CREATES THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE CHANGED BY MAGIC ART

13. Yet it is not on this account to be thought that the matter of visible things is subservient to the bidding of those wicked angels; but rather to that of God, by whom this power is given, just so far as He, who is unchangeable, determines in His lofty and spiritual abode to give it. For water and fire and earth are subservient even to wicked men, who are condemned to the mines, in order that they may do therewith what they will, but only so far as is permitted. Nor, in truth, are those evil angels to be called creators, because by their means the magicians, withstanding the servant of God, made frogs and serpents; for it was not they who created them. But, in truth, some hidden seeds of all things that are born corporeally

and visibly, are concealed in the corporeal elements of this world. For those seeds that are visible now to our eyes from fruits and living things, are quite distinct from the hidden seeds of those former seeds; from which, at the bidding of the Creator, the water produced the first swimming creatures and fowl, and the earth the first buds after their kind, and the first living creatures after their kind. For neither at that time were those seeds so drawn forth into products of their several kinds, as that the power of production was exhausted in those products; but oftentimes, suitable combinations of circumstances are wanting, whereby they may be enabled to burst forth and complete their species. For, consider, the very least shoot is a seed; for, if fitly consigned to the earth, it produces a tree. But of this shoot there is a yet more subtle seed in some grain of the same species, and this is visible even to us. But of this grain also there is further still a seed, which, although we are unable to see it with our eyes, yet we can conjecture its existence from our reason; because, except there were some such power in those elements, there would not so frequently be produced from the earth things which had not been sown there; nor yet so many animals, without any previous commixture of male and female; whether on the land, or in the water, which yet grow, and by commingling bring forth others, while themselves sprang up without any union of parents. And certainly bees do not conceive the seeds of their young by commixture, but gather them as they lie scattered over the earth with their mouth. For the Creator of these invisible seeds is the Creator of all things Himself; since whatever comes forth to our sight by being born, receives the first beginnings of its course from hidden seeds, and takes the successive increments of its proper size and its distinctive forms from these as it were original rules. As therefore we do not call parents the creators of men, nor farmers the creators of corn,—although it is by the outward application of their actions that the power of God operates within for the creating these things;—so it is not right to think not only the bad but even the good angels to be creators, if, through the subtilty of their perception and body, they know the seeds of things which to us are more hidden, and scatter them secretly through fit temperings of the elements, and so furnish opportunities of producing things, and of accelerating their increase. But neither do the good angels do these things, except as far as God commands, nor do the evil ones do them wrongfully, except as far as He righteously permits. For the malignity of the wicked one



makes his own will wrongful; but the power to do so, he receives rightfully, whether for his own punishment, or, in the case of others, for the punishment of the wicked, or for the praise of the good.

14. Accordingly, the Apostle Paul, distinguishing God's creating and forming within, from the operations of the creature which are applied from without, and drawing a similitude from agriculture, says, "I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." As, therefore, in the case of spiritual life itself, no one except God can work righteousness in our minds, yet men also are able to preach the gospel as an outward means, not only the good in sincerity, but also the evil in pretence; so in the creation of visible things it is God that works from within; but the exterior operations, whether of good or bad, of angels or men, or even of any kind of animal, according to His own absolute power, and to the distribution of faculties, and the several appetites for things pleasant, which He Himself has imparted, are applied by Him to that nature of things wherein He creates all things, in like manner as agriculture is to the soil. Wherefore I can no more call the bad angels, evoked by magic arts, the creators of the frogs and serpents, than I can say that bad men were creators of the corn crop, which I see to have sprung up through their labor.

15. Just as Jacob, again, was not the creator of the colors in the flocks, because he placed the various colored rods for the several mothers, as they drank, to look at in conceiving. Yet neither were the cattle themselves creators of the variety of their own offspring, because the variegated image, impressed through their eyes by the sight of the varied rods, clave to their soul, but could affect the body that was animated by the spirit thus affected only through sympathy with this commingling, so far as to stain with color the tender beginnings of their offspring. For that they are so affected from themselves, whether the soul from the body, or the body from the soul, arises in truth from suitable reasons, which immutably exist in that highest wisdom of God Himself, which no extent of place contains; and which, while it is itself unchangeable, yet quits not one even of those things which are changeable, because there is not one of them that is not created by itself. For it was the unchangeable and invisible reason of the wisdom of God, by which all things are created, which caused not rods, but cattle, to be born

from cattle; but that the color of the cattle conceived should be in any degree influenced by the variety of the rods, came to pass through the soul of the pregnant cattle being affected through their eyes from without, and so according to its own measure drawing inwardly within itself the rule of formation, which it received from the innermost power of its own Creator. How great, however, may be the power of the soul in affecting and changing corporeal substance (although certainly it cannot be called the creator of the body, because every cause of changeable and sensible substance, and all its measure and number and weight, by which are brought to pass both its being at all and its being of such and such a nature, arise from the intelligible and unchangeable life, which is above all things, and which reaches even to the most distant and earthly things), is a very copious subject, and one not now necessary. But I thought the act of Jacob about the cattle should be noticed, for this reason, viz. in order that it might be perceived that, if the man who thus placed those rods cannot be called the creator of the colors in the lambs and kids; nor yet even the souls themselves of the mothers, which colored the seeds conceived in the flesh by the image of variegated color, conceived through the eyes of the body, so far as nature permitted it; much less can it be said that the creators of the frogs and serpents were the bad angels, through whom the magicians of Pharaoh then made them.

## CHAPTER 9

### THE ORIGINAL CAUSE OF ALL THINGS IS FROM GOD

16. For it is one thing to make and administer the creature from the innermost and highest turning-point of causation, which He alone does who is God the Creator; but quite another thing to apply some operation from without in proportion to the strength and faculties assigned to each by Him, so that what is created may come forth into being at this time or at that, and in this or that way. For all these things in the way of original and beginning have already been created in a kind of texture of the elements, but they come forth when they get the opportunity. For as mothers are pregnant with young, so the world itself is pregnant with the causes of things that are born; which are not created in it, except from that highest essence, where nothing either springs up or dies, either begins to be or ceases. But the

applying from without of adventitious causes, which, although they are not natural, yet are to be applied according to nature, in order that those things which are contained and hidden in the secret bosom of nature may break forth and be outwardly created in some way by the unfolding of the proper measures and numbers and weights which they have received in secret from Him “who has ordered all things in measure and number and weight:” this is not only in the power of bad angels, but also of bad men, as I have shown above by the example of agriculture.

17. But lest the somewhat different condition of animals should trouble any one, in that they have the breath of life with the sense of desiring those things that are according to nature, and of avoiding those things that are contrary to it; we must consider also, how many men there are who know from what herbs or flesh, or from what juices or liquids you please, of whatever sort, whether so placed or so buried, or so bruised or so mixed, this or that animal is commonly born; yet who can be so foolish as to dare to call himself the creator of these animals? Is it, therefore, to be wondered at, if just as any, the most worthless of men, can know whence such or such worms and flies are produced; so the evil angels in proportion to the subtlety of their perceptions discern in the more hidden seeds of the elements whence frogs and serpents are produced, and so through certain and known opportune combinations applying these seeds by secret movements, cause them to be created, but do not create them? Only men do not marvel at those things that are usually done by men. But if any one chance to wonder at the quickness of those growths, in that those living beings were so quickly made, let him consider how even this may be brought about by men in proportion to the measure of human capability. For whence is it that the same bodies generate worms more quickly in summer than in winter, or in hotter than in colder places? Only these things are applied by men with so much the more difficulty, in proportion as their earthly and sluggish members are wanting in subtlety of perception, and in rapidity of bodily motion. And hence it arises that in the case of any kind of angels, in proportion as it is easier for them to draw out the proximate causes from the elements, so much the more marvellous is their rapidity in works of this kind.

18. But He only is the creator who is the chief former of these things. Neither can any one be this, unless He with whom primarily rests the measure, number, and weight of all things existing; and He is God the one Creator, by whose unspeakable power it comes to pass, also, that what these angels were able to do if they were permitted, they are therefore not able to do because they are not permitted. For there is no other reason why they who made frogs and serpents were not able to make the most minute flies, unless because the greater power of God was present prohibiting them, through the Holy Spirit; which even the magicians themselves confessed, saying, "This is the finger of God." But what they are able to do by nature, yet cannot do, because they are prohibited; and what the very condition of their nature itself does not suffer them to do; it is difficult, nay, impossible, for man to search out, unless through that gift of God which the apostle mentions when he says, "To another the discerning of spirits." For we know that a man can walk, yet that he cannot do so if he is not permitted; but that he cannot fly, even if he be permitted. So those angels, also, are able to do certain things if they are permitted by more powerful angels, according to the supreme commandment of God; but cannot do certain other things, not even if they are permitted by them; because He does not permit from whom they have received such and such a measure of natural powers: who, even by His angels, does not usually permit what He has given them power to be able to do.

19. Excepting, therefore, those corporeal things which are done in the order of nature in a perfectly usual series of times, as e.g., the rising and setting of the stars, the generations and deaths of animals, the innumerable diversities of seeds and buds, the vapors and the clouds, the snow and the rain, the lightnings and the thunder, the thunderbolts and the hail, the winds and the fire, cold and heat, and all like things; excepting also those which in the same order of nature occur rarely, such as eclipses, unusual appearances of stars, and monsters, and earthquakes, and such like;—all these, I say, are to be excepted, of which indeed the first and chief cause is only the will of God; whence also in the Psalm, when some things of this kind had been mentioned, "Fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind," lest any one should think those to be brought about either by chance or only from

corporeal causes, or even from such as are spiritual, but exist apart from the will of God, it is added immediately, “fulfilling His word.”

## CHAPTER 10

### IN HOW MANY WAYS THE CREATURE IS TO BE TAKEN BY WAY OF SIGN. THE EUCHARIST

Excepting, therefore, all these things as I just now said, there are some also of another kind; which, although from the same corporeal substance, are yet brought within reach of our senses in order to announce something from God, and these are properly called miracles and signs; yet is not the person of God Himself assumed in all things which are announced to us by the Lord God. When, however, that person is assumed, it is sometimes made manifest as an angel; sometimes in that form which is not an angel in his own proper being, although it is ordered and ministered by an angel. Again, when it is assumed in that form which is not an angel in his own proper being; sometimes in this case it is a body itself already existing, assumed after some kind of change, in order to make that message manifest; sometimes it is one that comes into being for the purpose, and that being accomplished, is discarded. Just as, also, when men are the messengers, sometimes they speak the words of God in their own person, as when it is premised, “The Lord said,” or, “Thus saith the Lord,” or any other such phrase, but sometimes without any such prefix, they take upon themselves the very person of God, as e.g.: “I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go:” so, not only in word, but also in act, the signifying of the person of God is imposed upon the prophet, in order that he may bear that person in the ministering of the prophecy; just as he, for instance, bore that person who divided his garment into twelve parts, and gave ten of them to the servant of King Solomon, to the future king of Israel. Sometimes, also, a thing which was not a prophet in his own proper self, and which existed already among earthly things, was assumed in order to signify this; as Jacob, when he had seen the dream, upon waking up did with the stone, which when asleep he had under his head. Sometimes a thing is made in the same kind, for the mere purpose; so as either to continue a little while in existence, as that brazen serpent was able to do which was lifted up in the wilderness, and as written records are able to do

likewise; or so as to pass away after having accomplished its ministry, as the bread made for the purpose is consumed in the receiving of the sacrament.

20. But because these things are known to men, in that they are done by men, they may well meet with reverence as being holy things, but they cannot cause wonder as being miracles. And therefore those things which are done by angels are the more wonderful to us, in that they are more difficult and more known; but they are known and easy to them as being their own actions. An angel speaks in the person of God to man, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;" the Scripture having said just before, "The angel of the Lord appeared to him." And a man also speaks in the person of God, saying, "Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee, O Israel: I am the Lord thy God." A rod was taken to serve as a sign, and was changed into a serpent by angelical power; but although that power is wanting to man, yet a stone was taken also by man for a similar sign. There is a wide difference between the deed of the angel and the deed of the man. The former is both to be wondered at and to be understood, the latter only to be understood. That which is understood from both, is perhaps one and the same; but those things from which it is understood, are different. Just as if the name of God were written both in gold and in ink; the former would be the more precious, the latter the more worthless; yet that which is signified in both is one and the same. And although the serpent that came from Moses' rod signified the same thing as Jacob's stone, yet Jacob's stone signified something better than did the serpents of the magicians. For as the anointing of the stone signified Christ in the flesh, in which He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows; so the rod of Moses, turned into a serpent, signified Christ Himself made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Whence it is said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" just as by gazing on that serpent which was lifted up in the wilderness, they did not perish by the bites of the serpents. For "our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." For by the serpent death is understood, which was wrought by the serpent in paradise, the mode of speech expressing the effect by the efficient.

Therefore the rod passed into the serpent, Christ into death; and the serpent again into the rod, whole Christ with His body into the resurrection; which body is the Church; and this shall be in the end of time, signified by the tail, which Moses held, in order that it might return into a rod. But the serpents of the magicians, like those who are dead in the world, unless by believing in Christ they shall have been as it were swallowed up by, and have entered into, His body, will not be able to rise again in Him. Jacob's stone, therefore, as I said, signified something better than did the serpents of the magicians; yet the deed of the magicians was much more wonderful. But these things in this way are no hindrance to the understanding of the matter; just as if the name of a man were written in gold, and that of God in ink.

21. What man, again, knows how the angels made or took those clouds and fires in order to signify the message they were bearing, even if we supposed that the Lord or the Holy Spirit was manifested in those corporeal forms? Just as infants do not know of that which is placed upon the altar and consumed after the performance of the holy celebration, whence or in what manner it is made, or whence it is taken for religious use. And if they were never to learn from their own experience or that of others, and never to see that species of thing except during the celebration of the sacrament, when it is being offered and given; and if it were told them by the most weighty authority whose body and blood it is; they will believe nothing else, except that the Lord absolutely appeared in this form to the eyes of mortals, and that that liquid actually flowed from the piercing of a side which resembled this. But it is certainly a useful caution to myself, that I should remember what my own powers are, and admonish my brethren that they also remember what theirs are, lest human infirmity pass on beyond what is safe. For how the angels do these things, or rather, how God does these things by His angels, and how far He wills them to be done even by the bad angels, whether by permitting, or commanding, or compelling, from the hidden seat of His own supreme power; this I can neither penetrate by the sight of the eyes, nor make clear by assurance of reason, nor be carried on to comprehend it by reach of intellect, so as to speak thereupon to all questions that may be asked respecting these matters, as certainly as if I were an angel, or a prophet, or an apostle. "For the thoughts of mortal men are miserable, and our devices are but uncertain. For the corruptible body

presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind, that museth upon many things. And hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth, and with labor do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in heaven, who hath searched out?" But because it goes on to say, "And Thy counsel who hath known, except Thou give wisdom, and send Thy Holy Spirit from above;" therefore we refrain indeed from searching out the things which are in heaven, under which kind are contained both angelical bodies according to their proper dignity, and any corporeal action of those bodies; yet, according to the Spirit of God sent to us from above, and to His grace imparted to our minds, I dare to say confidently, that neither God the Father, nor His Word, nor His Spirit, which is the one God, is in any way changeable in regard to that which He is, and whereby He is that which He is; and much less is in this regard visible. Since there are no doubt some things changeable, yet not visible, as are our thoughts, and memories, and wills, and the whole incorporeal creature; but there is nothing that is visible that is not also changeable.

#### CHAPTER 11

THE ESSENCE OF GOD NEVER APPEARED IN ITSELF. DIVINE APPEARANCES TO THE FATHERS WROUGHT BY THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS. AN OBJECTION DRAWN FROM THE MODE OF SPEECH REMOVED. THAT THE APPEARING OF GOD TO ABRAHAM HIMSELF, JUST AS THAT TO MOSES, WAS WROUGHT BY ANGELS. THE SAME THING IS PROVED BY THE LAW BEING GIVEN TO MOSES BY ANGELS. WHAT HAS BEEN SAID IN THIS BOOK, AND WHAT REMAINS TO BE SAID IN THE NEXT

Wherefore the substance, or, if it is better so to say, the essence of God, wherein we understand, in proportion to our measure, in however small a degree, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, since it is in no way changeable, can in no way in its proper self be visible.

22. It is manifest, accordingly, that all those appearances to the fathers, when God was presented to them according to His own dispensation, suitable to the times, were wrought through the creature. And if we cannot discern in what manner He wrought them by ministry of angels, yet we say that they were wrought by angels; but not from our own power of discernment, lest we should seem to any one to be wise beyond our measure, whereas we are wise so as to think soberly, as God hath dealt to us



the measure of faith; and we believe, and therefore speak. For the authority is extant of the divine Scriptures, from which our reason ought not to turn aside; nor by leaving the solid support of the divine utterance, to fall headlong over the precipice of its own surmisings, in matters wherein neither the perceptions of the body rule, nor the clear reason of the truth shines forth. Now, certainly, it is written most clearly in the Epistle to the Hebrews, when the dispensation of the New Testament was to be distinguished from the dispensation of the Old, according to the fitness of ages and of times, that not only those visible things, but also the word itself, was wrought by angels. For it is said thus: “But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Whence it appears that all those things were not only wrought by angels, but wrought also on our account, that is, on account of the people of God, to whom is promised the inheritance of eternal life. As it is written also to the Corinthians, “Now all these things happened unto them in a figure: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” And then, demonstrating by plain consequence that as at that time the word was spoken by the angels, so now by the Son; “Therefore,” he says, “we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” And then, as though you asked, What salvation?—in order to show that he is now speaking of the New Testament, that is, of the word which was spoken not by angels, but by the Lord, he says, “Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will.”

23. But some one may say, Why then is it written, “The Lord said to Moses;” and not, rather, The angel said to Moses? Because, when the crier proclaims the words of the judge, it is not usually written in the record, so and so the crier said, but so and so the judge. In like manner also, when the holy prophet speaks, although we say, The prophet said, we mean nothing

else to be understood than that the Lord said; and if we were to say, The Lord said, we should not put the prophet aside, but only intimate who spake by him. And, indeed, these Scriptures often reveal the angel to be the Lord, of whose speaking it is from time to time said, “the Lord said,” as we have shown already. But on account of those who, since the Scripture in that place specifies an angel, will have the Son of God Himself and in Himself to be understood, because He is called an angel by the prophet, as announcing the will of His Father and of Himself; I have therefore thought fit to produce a plainer testimony from this epistle, where it is not said by an angel, but “by angels.”

24. For Stephen, too, in the Acts of the Apostles, relates these things in that manner in which they are also written in the Old Testament: “Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken,” he says; “The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia.” But lest any one should think that the God of glory appeared then to the eyes of any mortal in that which He is in Himself, he goes on to say that an angel appeared to Moses. “Then fled Moses,” he says, “at that saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons. And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet,” etc. Here, certainly, he speaks both of angel and of Lord; and of the same as the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; as is written in Genesis.

25. Can there be any one who will say that the Lord appeared to Moses by an angel, but to Abraham by Himself? Let us not answer this question from Stephen, but from the book itself, whence Stephen took his narrative. For, pray, because it is written, “And the Lord God said unto Abraham;” and a little after, “And the Lord God appeared unto Abraham;” were these things, for this reason, not done by angels? Whereas it is said in like manner in another place, “And the Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, as he

sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;" and yet it is added immediately, "And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him:" of whom we have already spoken. For how will these people, who either will not rise from the words to the meaning, or easily throw themselves down from the meaning to the words,—how, I say, will they be able to explain that God was seen in three men, except they confess that they were angels, as that which follows also shows? Because it is not said an angel spoke or appeared to him, will they therefore venture to say that the vision and voice granted to Moses was wrought by an angel because it is so written, but that God appeared and spake in His own substance to Abraham because there is no mention made of an angel? What of the fact, that even in respect to Abraham an angel is not left unmentioned? For when his son was ordered to be offered up as a sacrifice, we read thus: "And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of." Certainly God is here mentioned, not an angel. But a little afterwards Scripture hath it thus: "And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him." What can be answered to this? Will they say that God commanded that Isaac should be slain, and that an angel forbade it? and further, that the father himself, in opposition to the decree of God, who had commanded that he should be slain, obeyed the angel, who had bidden him spare him? Such an interpretation is to be rejected as absurd. Yet not even for it, gross and abject as it is, does Scripture leave any room, for it immediately adds: "For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, on account of me." What is "on account of me," except on account of Him who had commanded him to be slain? Was then the God of Abraham the same as the angel, or was it not rather God by an angel? Consider what follows. Here, certainly, already an angel has been most clearly spoken of; yet notice the context: "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-

offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place, The Lord saw: as it is said to this day, In the mount the Lord was seen.” Just as that which a little before God said by an angel, “For now I know that thou fearest God;” not because it was to be understood that God then came to know, but that He brought it to pass that through God Abraham himself came to know what strength of heart he had to obey God, even to the sacrificing of his only son: after that mode of speech in which the effect is signified by the efficient,—as cold is said to be sluggish, because it makes men sluggish; so that He was therefore said to know, because He had made Abraham himself to know, who might well have not discerned the firmness of his own faith, had it not been proved by such a trial. So here, too, Abraham called the name of the place “The Lord saw,” that is, caused Himself to be seen. For he goes on immediately to say, “As it is said to this day, In the mount the Lord was seen.” Here you see the same angel is called Lord: wherefore, unless because the Lord spake by the angel? But if we pass on to that which follows, the angel altogether speaks as a prophet, and reveals expressly that God is speaking by the angel. “And the angel of the Lord,” he says, “called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself I have sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, on account of me,” etc. Certainly these words, viz. that he by whom the Lord speaks should say, “Thus saith the Lord,” are commonly used by the prophets also. Does the Son of God say of the Father, “The Lord saith,” while He Himself is that Angel of the Father? What then? Do they not see how hard pressed they are about these three men who appeared to Abraham, when it had been said before, “The Lord appeared to him?” Were they not angels because they are called men? Let them read Daniel, saying, “Behold the man Gabriel.”

26. But why do we delay any longer to stop their mouths by another most clear and most weighty proof, where not an angel in the singular nor men in the plural are spoken of, but simply angels; by whom not any particular word was wrought, but the Law itself is most distinctly declared to be given; which certainly none of the faithful doubts that God gave to Moses for the control of the children of Israel, or yet, that it was given by angels. So Stephen speaks: “Ye stiff-necked,” he says, “and uncircumcised in heart

and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the Law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.” What is more evident than this? What more strong than such an authority? The Law, indeed, was given to that people by the disposition of angels; but the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ was by it prepared and pre-announced; and He Himself, as the Word of God, was in some wonderful and unspeakable manner in the angels, by whose disposition the Law itself was given. And hence He said in the Gospel, “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.” Therefore then the Lord was speaking by the angels; and the son of God, who was to be the Mediator of God and men, from the seed of Abraham, was preparing His own advent by the angels, that He might find some by whom He would be received, confessing themselves guilty, whom the Law unfulfilled had made transgressors. And hence the apostle also says to the Galatians, “Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made, which [seed] was ordered through angels in the hand of a mediator;” that is, ordered through angels in His own hand. For He was not born in limitation, but in power. But you learn in another place that he does not mean any one of the angels as a mediator, but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in so far as He deigned to be made man: “For there is one God,” he says, “and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” Hence that passover in the killing of the lamb: hence all those things which are figuratively spoken in the Law, of Christ to come in the flesh, and to suffer, but also to rise again, which Law was given by the disposition of angels; in which angels, were certainly the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and in which, sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Holy Spirit, and sometimes God, without any distinction of person, was figuratively signified by them, although appearing in visible and sensible forms, yet by His own creature, not by His substance, in order to the seeing of which, hearts are cleansed through all those things which are seen by the eyes and heard by the ears.

27. But now, as I think, that which we had undertaken to show in this book has been sufficiently discussed and demonstrated, according to our capacity; and it has been established, both by probable reason, so far as a man, or rather, so far as I am able, and by strength of authority, so far as the divine declarations from the Holy Scriptures have been made clear, that those words and bodily appearances which were given to these ancient fathers of ours before the incarnation of the Saviour, when God was said to appear, were wrought by angels: whether themselves speaking or doing something in the person of God, as we have shown that the prophets also were wont to do, or assuming from the creature that which they themselves were not, wherein God might be shown in a figure to men; which manner of showing also, Scripture teaches by many examples, that the prophets, too, did not omit. It remains, therefore, now for us to consider,—since both in the Lord as born of a virgin, and in the Holy Spirit descending in a corporeal form like a dove, and in the tongues like as of fire, which appeared with a sound from heaven on the day of Pentecost, after the ascension of the Lord, it was not the Word of God Himself by His own substance, in which He is equal and eternal with the Father, nor the Spirit of the Father and of the Son by His own substance, in which He Himself also is equal and co-eternal with both, but assuredly a creature, such as could be formed and exist in these fashions, which appeared to corporeal and mortal senses,—it remains, I say, to consider what difference there is between these manifestations and those which were proper to the Son of God and to the Holy Spirit, although wrought by the visible creature; which subject we shall more conveniently begin in another book.

# Book IV

Explains for what the Son of God was sent, viz, that by Christ's dying for sinners, we were to be convinced how great is God's love for us, and also what manner of men we are whom He loved. That the Word came in the flesh, to the purpose also of enabling us to be so cleansed as to contemplate and cleave to God. That our double death was abolished by His death, being one and single. And hereupon is discussed, how the single of our Saviour harmonizes to salvation with our double; and the perfection is treated at length of the senary number, to which the ratio itself of single to double is reducible. That all are gathered together from many into one by the one Mediator of life, viz. Christ, through Whom alone is wrought the true cleansing of the soul. Further it is demonstrated that the Son of God, although made less by being sent, on account of the form of a servant which He took, is not therefore less than the Father according to the form of God, because He was sent by Himself: and that the same account is to be given of the sending of the Holy Spirit.

## PREFACE

### THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS TO BE SOUGHT FROM GOD

1. The knowledge of things terrestrial and celestial is commonly thought much of by men. Yet those doubtless judge better who prefer to that knowledge, the knowledge of themselves; and that mind is more praiseworthy which knows even its own weakness, than that which, without regard to this, searches out, and even comes to know, the ways of the stars, or which holds fast such knowledge already acquired, while ignorant of the way by which itself to enter into its own proper health and strength. But if any one has already become awake towards God, kindled by the warmth of the Holy Spirit, and in the love of God has become vile in his own eyes; and through wishing, yet not having strength to come in unto Him, and through

the light He gives, has given heed to himself, and has found himself, and has learned that his own filthiness cannot mingle with His purity; and feels it sweet to weep and to entreat Him, that again and again He will have compassion, until he have put off all his wretchedness; and to pray confidently, as having already received of free gift the pledge of salvation through his only Saviour and Enlightener of man:—such an one, so acting, and so lamenting, knowledge does not puff up, because charity edifieth; for he has preferred knowledge to knowledge, he has preferred to know his own weakness, rather than to know the walls of the world, the foundations of the earth, and the pinnacles of heaven. And by obtaining this knowledge, he has obtained also sorrow; but sorrow for straying away from the desire of reaching his own proper country, and the Creator of it, his own blessed God. And if among men such as these, in the family of Thy Christ, O Lord my God, I groan among Thy poor, give me out of Thy bread to answer men who do not hunger and thirst after righteousness, but are sated and abound. But it is the vain image of those things that has sated them, not Thy truth, which they have repelled and shrunk from, and so fall into their own vanity. I certainly know how many figments the human heart gives birth to. And what is my own heart but a human heart? But I pray the God of my heart, that I may not vomit forth (eructuem) into these writings any of these figments for solid truths, but that there may pass into them only what the breath of His truth has breathed into me; cast out though I am from the sight of His eyes, and striving from afar to return by the way which the divinity of His only-begotten Son has made by His humanity. And this truth, changeable though I am, I so far drink in, as far as in it I see nothing changeable: neither in place and time, as is the case with bodies; nor in time alone, and in a certain sense place, as with the thoughts of our own spirits; nor in time alone, and not even in any semblance of place, as with some of the reasonings of our own minds. For the essence of God, whereby He is, has altogether nothing changeable, neither in eternity, nor in truth, nor in will; since there truth is eternal, love eternal; and there love is true, eternity true; and there eternity is loved, and truth is loved.



## CHAPTER 1

### WE ARE MADE PERFECT BY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR OWN WEAKNESS. THE INCARNATE WORD DISPELS OUR DARKNESS

2. But since we are exiled from the unchangeable joy, yet neither cut off nor torn away from it so that we should not seek eternity, truth, blessedness, even in those changeable and temporal things (for we wish neither to die, nor to be deceived, nor to be troubled); visions have been sent to us from heaven suitable to our state of pilgrimage, in order to remind us that what we seek is not here, but that from this pilgrimage we must return thither, whence unless we originated we should not here seek these things. And first we have had to be persuaded how much God loved us, lest from despair we should not dare to look up to Him. And we needed to be shown also what manner of men we are whom He loved, lest being proud, as if of our own merits, we should recede the more from Him, and fail the more in our own strength. And hence He so dealt with us, that we might the rather profit by His strength, and that so in the weakness of humility the virtue of charity might be perfected. And this is intimated in the Psalm, where it is said, “Thou, O God, didst send a spontaneous rain, whereby Thou didst make Thine inheritance perfect, when it was weary.” For by “spontaneous rain” nothing else is meant than grace, not rendered to merit, but given freely, whence also it is called grace; for He gave it, not because we were worthy, but because He willed. And knowing this, we shall not trust in ourselves; and this is to be made “weak.” But He Himself makes us perfect, who says also to the Apostle Paul, “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Man, then, was to be persuaded how much God loved us, and what manner of men we were whom He loved; the former, lest we should despair; the latter, lest we should be proud. And this most necessary topic the apostle thus explains: “But God commendeth,” he says, “His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” Also in another place: “What,” he says, “shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not with Him

also freely given us all things?” Now that which is declared to us as already done, was shown also to the ancient righteous as about to be done; that through the same faith they themselves also might be humbled, and so made weak; and might be made weak, and so perfected.

3. Because therefore the Word of God is One, by which all things were made, which is the unchangeable truth, all things are simultaneously therein, potentially and unchangeably; not only those things which are now in this whole creation, but also those which have been and those which shall be. And therein they neither have been, nor shall be, but only are; and all things are life, and all things are one; or rather it is one being and one life. For all things were so made by Him, that whatsoever was made in them was not made in Him, but was life in Him. Since, “in the beginning,” the Word was not made, but “the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and all things were made by Him;” neither had all things been made by Him, unless He had Himself been before all things and not made. But in those things which were made by Him, even body, which is not life, would not have been made by Him, except it had been life in Him before it was made. For “that which was made was already life in Him;” and not life of any kind soever: for the soul also is the life of the body, but this too is made, for it is changeable; and by what was it made, except by the unchangeable Word of God? For “all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” “What, therefore, was made was already life in Him;” and not any kind of life, but “the life [which] was the light of men;” the light certainly of rational minds, by which men differ from beasts, and therefore are men. Therefore not corporeal light, which is the light of the flesh, whether it shine from heaven, or whether it be lighted by earthly fires; nor that of human flesh only, but also that of beasts, and down even to the minutest of worms. For all these things see that light: but that life was the light of men; nor is it far from any one of us, for in it “we live, and move, and have our being.”

## CHAPTER 2

HOW WE ARE RENDERED APT FOR THE PERCEPTION OF TRUTH THROUGH THE INCARNATE WORD

4. But “the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” Now the “darkness” is the foolish minds of men, made blind by vicious desires and unbelief. And that the Word, by whom all things were made, might care for these and heal them, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” For our enlightening is the partaking of the Word, namely, of that life which is the light of men. But for this partaking we were utterly unfit, and fell short of it, on account of the uncleanness of sins. Therefore we were to be cleansed. And further, the one cleansing of the unrighteous and of the proud is the blood of the Righteous One, and the humbling of God Himself; that we might be cleansed through Him, made as He was what we are by nature, and what we are not by sin, that we might contemplate God, which by nature we are not. For by nature we are not God: by nature we are men, by sin we are not righteous. Wherefore God, made a righteous man, interceded with God for man the sinner. For the sinner is not congruous to the righteous, but man is congruous to man. By joining therefore to us the likeness of His humanity, He took away the unlikeness of our unrighteousness; and by being made partaker of our mortality, He made us partakers of His divinity. For the death of the sinner springing from the necessity of condemnation is deservedly abolished by the death of the Righteous One springing from the free choice of His compassion, while His single [death and resurrection] answers to our double [death and resurrection]. For this congruity, or suitableness, or concord, or consonance, or whatever more appropriate word there may be, whereby one is [united] to two, is of great weight in all compacting, or better, perhaps, co-adaptation, of the creature. For (as it just occurs to me) what I mean is precisely that co-adaptation which the Greeks call harmonia. However this is not the place to set forth the power of that consonance of single to double which is found especially in us, and which is naturally so implanted in us (and by whom, except by Him who created us?), that not even the ignorant can fail to perceive it, whether when singing themselves or hearing others. For by this it is that treble and bass voices are in harmony, so that any one who in his note departs from it, offends extremely, not only trained skill, of which the most part of men are devoid, but the very sense of hearing. To demonstrate this, needs no doubt a long discourse; but any one who knows it, may make it plain to the very ear in a rightly ordered monochord.

## CHAPTER 3

THE ONE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST HARMONIZES WITH OUR DOUBLE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF BODY AND SOUL, TO THE EFFECT OF SALVATION. IN WHAT WAY THE SINGLE DEATH OF CHRIST IS BESTOWED UPON OUR DOUBLE DEATH

5. But for our present need we must discuss, so far as God gives us power, in what manner the single of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ answers to, and is, so to say, in harmony with our double to the effect of salvation. We certainly, as no Christian doubts, are dead both in soul and body: in soul, because of sin; in body, because of the punishment of sin, and through this also in body because of sin. And to both these parts of ourselves, that is, both to soul and to body, there was need both of a medicine and of resurrection, that what had been changed for the worse might be renewed for the better. Now the death of the soul is ungodliness, and the death of the body is corruptibility, through which comes also a departure of the soul from the body. For as the soul dies when God leaves it, so the body dies when the soul leaves it; whereby the former becomes foolish, the latter lifeless. For the soul is raised up again by repentance, and the renewing of life is begun in the body still mortal by faith, by which men believe on Him who justifies the ungodly; and it is increased and strengthened by good habits from day to day, as the inner man is renewed more and more. But the body, being as it were the outward man, the longer this life lasts is so much the more corrupted, either by age or by disease, or by various afflictions, until it come to that last affliction which all call death. And its resurrection is delayed until the end; when also our justification itself shall be perfected ineffably. For then we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. But now, so long as the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and human life upon earth is all temptation, in His sight shall no man living be justified, in comparison of the righteousness in which we shall be made equal with the angels, and of the glory which shall be revealed in us. But why mention more proofs respecting the difference between the death of the soul and the death of the body, when the Lord in one sentence of the Gospel has made either death easily distinguishable by any one from the other, where He says, "Let the dead bury their dead"? For burial was the fitting disposal of a dead body. But by those who were to bury it He meant those who were dead

in soul by the impiety of unbelief, such, namely, as are awakened when it is said, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” And there is a death which the apostle denounces, saying of the widow, “But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” Therefore the soul, which was before ungodly and is now godly, is said to have come alive again from the dead and to live, on account of the righteousness of faith. But the body is not only said to be about to die, on account of that departure of the soul which will be; but on account of the great infirmity of flesh and blood it is even said to be now dead, in a certain place in the Scriptures, namely, where the apostle says, that “the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.” Now this life is wrought by faith, “since the just shall live by faith.” But what follows? “But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit which dwelleth in you.”

6. Therefore on this double death of ours our Saviour bestowed His own single death; and to cause both our resurrections, He appointed beforehand and set forth in mystery and type His own one resurrection. For He was not a sinner or ungodly, that, as though dead in spirit, He should need to be renewed in the inner man, and to be recalled as it were to the life of righteousness by repentance; but being clothed in mortal flesh, and in that alone dying, in that alone rising again, in that alone did He answer to both for us; since in it was wrought a mystery as regards the inner man, and a type as regards the outer. For it was in a mystery as regards our inner man, so as to signify the death of our soul, that those words were uttered, not only in the Psalm, but also on the cross: “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” To which words the apostle agrees, saying, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin;” since by the crucifixion of the inner man are understood the pains of repentance, and a certain wholesome agony of self-control, by which death the death of ungodliness is destroyed, and in which death God has left us. And so the body of sin is destroyed through such a cross, that now we should not yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. Because, if even the inner man certainly is renewed day by day, yet undoubtedly it is old before it is

renewed. For that is done inwardly of which the same apostle speaks: "Put off the old man, and put on the new;" which he goes on to explain by saying, "Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth." But where is lying put away, unless inwardly, that he who speaketh the truth from his heart may inhabit the holy hill of God? But the resurrection of the body of the Lord is shown to belong to the mystery of our own inner resurrection, where, after He had risen, He says to the woman, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;" with which mystery the apostle's words agree, where he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your thoughts on things above." For not to touch Christ, unless when He had ascended to the Father, means not to have thoughts of Christ after a fleshly manner. Again, the death of the flesh of our Lord contains a type of the death of our outer man, since it is by such suffering most of all that He exhorts His servants that they should not fear those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Wherefore the apostle says, "That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh." And the resurrection of the body of the Lord is found to contain a type of the resurrection of our outward man, because He says to His disciples, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." And one of the disciples also, handling His scars, exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" And whereas the entire integrity of that flesh was apparent, this was shown in that which He had said when exhorting His disciples: "There shall not a hair of your head perish." For how comes it that first is said, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;" and how comes it that before He ascends to the Father, He actually is touched by the disciples: unless because in the former the mystery of the inner man was intimated, in the latter a type was given of the outer man? Or can any one possibly be so without understanding, and so turned away from the truth, as to dare to say that He was touched by men before He ascended, but by women when He had ascended? It was on account of this type, which went before in the Lord, of our future resurrection in the body, that the apostle says, "Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's." For it was the resurrection of the body to which this place refers, on account of which he also says, "Who has changed our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." The one death therefore of our Saviour brought salvation to

our double death, and His one resurrection wrought for us two resurrections; since His body in both cases, that is, both in His death and in His resurrection, was ministered to us by a kind of healing suitableness, both as a mystery of the inner man, and as a type of the outer.

#### CHAPTER 4

THE RATIO OF THE SINGLE TO THE DOUBLE COMES FROM THE PERFECTION OF THE SENARY NUMBER. THE PERFECTION OF THE SENARY NUMBER IS COMMENDED IN THE SCRIPTURES. THE YEAR ABOUNDS IN THE SENARY NUMBER

7. Now this ratio of the single to the double arises, no doubt, from the ternary number, since one added to two makes three; but the whole which these make reaches to the senary, for one and two and three make six. And this number is on that account called perfect, because it is completed in its own parts: for it has these three, sixth, third, and half; nor is there any other part found in it, which we can call an aliquot part. The sixth part of it, then, is one; the third part, two; the half, three. But one and two and three complete the same six. And Holy Scripture commends to us the perfection of this number, especially in this, that God finished His works in six days, and on the sixth day man was made in the image of God. And the Son of God came and was made the Son of man, that He might re-create us after the image of God, in the sixth age of the human race. For that is now the present age, whether a thousand years apiece are assigned to each age, or whether we trace out memorable and remarkable epochs or turning-points of time in the divine Scriptures, so that the first age is to be found from Adam until Noah, and the second thence onwards to Abraham, and then next, after the division of Matthew the evangelist, from Abraham to David, from David to the carrying away to Babylon, and from thence to the travail of the Virgin, which three ages joined to those other two make five. Accordingly, the nativity of the Lord began the sixth, which is now going onwards until the hidden end of time. We recognize also in this senary number a kind of figure of time, in that threefold mode of division, by which we compute one portion of time before the Law; a second, under the Law; a third, under grace. In which last time we have received the sacrament of renewal, that we may be renewed also in the end of time, in every part, by the resurrection of the flesh, and so may be made whole from

our entire infirmity, not only of soul, but also of body. And thence that woman is understood to be a type of the church, who was made whole and upright by the Lord, after she had been bowed by infirmity through the binding of Satan. For those words of the Psalm lament such hidden enemies: "They bowed down my soul." And this woman had her infirmity eighteen years, which is thrice six. And the months of eighteen years are found in number to be the cube of six, viz. six times six times six. Nearly, too, in the same place in the Gospel is that fig tree, which was convicted also by the third year of its miserable barrenness. But intercession was made for it, that it might be let alone that year, that year, that if it bore fruit, well; if otherwise, it should be cut down. For both three years belong to the same threefold division, and the months of three years make the square of six, which is six times six.

8. A single year also, if the whole twelve months are taken into account, which are made up of thirty days each (for the month that has been kept from of old is that which the revolution of the moon determines), abounds in the number six. For that which six is, in the first order of numbers, which consists of units up to ten, that sixty is in the second order, which consists of tens up to a hundred. Sixty days, then, are a sixth part of the year. Further, if that which stands as the sixth of the second order is multiplied by the sixth of the first order, then we make six times sixty, i.e. three hundred and sixty days, which are the whole twelve months. But since, as the revolution of the moon determines the month for men, so the year is marked by the revolution of the sun; and five days and a quarter of a day remain, that the sun may fulfill its course and end the year; for four quarters make one day, which must be intercalated in every fourth year, which they call bissextile, that the order of time may not be disturbed: if we consider, also, these five days and a quarter themselves, the number six prevails in them. First, because, as it is usual to compute the whole from a part, we must not call it five days, but rather six, taking the quarter days for one day. Next, because five days themselves are the sixth part of a month; while the quarter of a day contains six hours. For the entire day, i.e. including its night, is twenty-four hours, of which the fourth part, which is a quarter of a day, is found to be six hours. So much in the course of the year does the sixth number prevail.



## CHAPTER 5

### THE NUMBER SIX IS ALSO COMMENDED IN THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST AND OF THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM

9. And not without reason is the number six understood to be put for a year in the building up of the body of the Lord, as a figure of which He said that He would raise up in three days the temple destroyed by the Jews. For they said, “Forty and six years was this temple in building.” And six times forty-six makes two hundred and seventy-six. And this number of days completes nine months and six days, which are reckoned, as it were, ten months for the travail of women; not because all come to the sixth day after the ninth month, but because the perfection itself of the body of the Lord is found to have been brought in so many days to the birth, as the authority of the church maintains upon the tradition of the elders. For He is believed to have been conceived on the 25th of March, upon which day also He suffered; so the womb of the Virgin, in which He was conceived, where no one of mortals was begotten, corresponds to the new grave in which He was buried, wherein was never man laid, neither before nor since. But He was born, according to tradition, upon December the 25th. If, then you reckon from that day to this you find two hundred and seventy-six days which is forty-six times six. And in this number of years the temple was built, because in that number of sixes the body of the Lord was perfected; which being destroyed by the suffering of death, He raised again on the third day. For “He spake this of the temple of His body,” as is declared by the most clear and solid testimony of the Gospel; where He said, “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

## CHAPTER 6

### THE THREE DAYS OF THE RESURRECTION, IN WHICH ALSO THE RATIO OF SINGLE TO DOUBLE IS APPARENT

10. Scripture again witnesses that the space of those three days themselves was not whole and entire, but the first day is counted as a whole from its last part, and the third day is itself also counted as a whole from its first part; but the intervening day, i.e. the second day, was absolutely a whole

with its twenty-four hours, twelve of the day and twelve of the night. For He was crucified first by the voices of the Jews in the third hour, when it was the sixth day of the week. Then He hung on the cross itself at the sixth hour, and yielded up His spirit at the ninth hour. But He was buried, “now when the even was come,” as the words of the evangelist express it; which means, at the end of the day. Wheresoever then you begin,—even if some other explanation can be given, so as not to contradict the Gospel of John, but to understand that He was suspended on the cross at the third hour,—still you cannot make the first day an entire day. It will be reckoned then an entire day from its last part, as the third from its first part. For the night up to the dawn, when the resurrection of the Lord was made known, belongs to the third day; because God (who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, that through the grace of the New Testament and the partaking of the resurrection of Christ the words might be spoken to us “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord” ) intimates to us in some way that the day takes its beginning from the night. For as the first days of all were reckoned from light to night, on account of the future fall of man; so these on account of the restoration of man, are reckoned from darkness to light. From the hour, then, of His death to the dawn of the resurrection are forty hours, counting in also the ninth hour itself. And with this number agrees also His life upon earth of forty days after His resurrection. And this number is most frequently used in Scripture to express the mystery of perfection in the fourfold world. For the number ten has a certain perfection, and that multiplied by four makes forty. But from the evening of the burial to the dawn of the resurrection are thirty-six hours which is six squared. And this is referred to that ratio of the single to the double wherein there is the greatest consonance of co-adaptation. For twelve added to twenty-four suits the ratio of single added to double and makes thirty-six: namely a whole night with a whole day and a whole night, and this not without the mystery which I have noticed above. For not unfitly do we liken the spirit to the day and the body to the night. For the body of the Lord in His death and resurrection was a figure of our spirit and a type of our body. In this way, then, also that ratio of the single to the double is apparent in the thirty-six hours, when twelve are added to twenty-four. As to the reasons, indeed, why these numbers are so put in the Holy Scriptures, other people may trace out other reasons, either such that those which I

have given are to be preferred to them, or such as are equally probable with mine, or even more probable than they are; but there is no one surely so foolish or so absurd as to contend that they are so put in the Scriptures for no purpose at all, and that there are no mystical reasons why those numbers are there mentioned. But those reasons which I have here given, I have either gathered from the authority of the church, according to the tradition of our forefathers, or from the testimony of the divine Scriptures, or from the nature itself of numbers and of similitudes. No sober person will decide against reason, no Christian against the Scriptures, no peaceable person against the church.

## CHAPTER 7

### IN WHAT MANNER WE ARE GATHERED FROM MANY INTO ONE THROUGH ONE MEDIATOR

11. This mystery, this sacrifice, this priest, this God, before He was sent and came, being made of a woman—of Him, all those things which appeared to our fathers in a sacred and mystical way by angelical miracles, or which were done by the fathers themselves, were similitudes; in order that every creature by its acts might speak in some way of that One who was to be, in whom there was to be salvation in the recovery of all from death. For because by the wickedness of ungodliness we had recoiled and fallen away in discord from the one true and supreme God, and had in many things become vain, being distracted through many things and cleaving fast to many things; it was needful, by the decree and command of God in His mercy, that those same many things should join in proclaiming the One that should come, and that One should come so proclaimed by these many things, and that these many things should join in witnessing that this One had come; and that so, freed from the burden of these many things, we should come to that One, and dead as we were in our souls by many sins, and destined to die in the flesh on account of sin, that we should love that One who, without sin, died in the flesh for us; and by believing in Him now raised again, and by rising again with Him in the spirit through faith, that we should be justified by being made one in the one righteous One; and that we should not despair of our own resurrection in the flesh itself, when we consider that the one Head had gone before us the many members; in

whom, being now cleansed through faith, and then renewed by sight, and through Him as mediator reconciled to God, we are to cleave to the One, to feast upon the One, to continue one.

## CHAPTER 8

### IN WHAT MANNER CHRIST WILLS THAT ALL SHALL BE ONE IN HIMSELF

12. So the Son of God Himself, the Word of God, Himself also the Mediator between God and men, the Son of man, equal to the Father through the unity of the Godhead, and partaker with us by the taking upon Him of humanity, interceding for us with the Father in that He was man, yet not concealing that He was God, one with the Father, among other things speaks thus: “Neither pray I for these alone,” He says, “but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”

## CHAPTER 9

### THE SAME ARGUMENT CONTINUED

He did not say, I and they are one thing; although, in that He is the head of the church which is His body, He might have said, and they are, not one thing, but one person, because the head and the body is one Christ; but in order to show His own Godhead consubstantial with the Father (for which reason He says in another place, “I and my Father are one” ), in His own kind, that is, in the consubstantial parity of the same nature, He wills His own to be one, but in Himself; since they could not be so in themselves, separated as they are one from another by divers pleasures and desires and uncleannesses of sin; whence they are cleansed through the Mediator, that they may be one in Him, not only through the same nature in which all become from mortal men equal to the angels, but also through the same will most harmoniously conspiring to the same blessedness, and fused in some way by the fire of charity into one spirit. For to this His words come, “That they may be one, even as we are one;” namely, that as the Father and Son are one, not only in equality of substance, but also in will, so those also may

be one, between whom and God the Son is mediator, not only in that they are of the same nature, but also through the same union of love. And then He goes on thus to intimate the truth itself, that He is the Mediator, through whom we are reconciled to God, by saying, “I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”

## CHAPTER 10

AS CHRIST IS THE MEDIATOR OF LIFE, SO THE DEVIL IS THE MEDIATOR OF DEATH

13. Therein is our true peace and firm bond of union with our Creator, that we should be purified and reconciled through the Mediator of life, as we had been polluted and alienated, and so had departed from Him, through the mediator of death. For as the devil through pride led man through pride to death; so Christ through lowliness led back man through obedience to life. Since, as the one fell through being lifted up, and cast down [man] also who consented to him; so the other was raised up through being abased, and lifted up [man] also who believed in Him. For because the devil had not himself come thither whither he had led the way (inasmuch as he bare indeed in his ungodliness the death of the spirit, but had not undergone the death of the flesh, because he had not assumed the covering of the flesh), he appeared to man to be a mighty chief among the legions of devils, through whom he exercises his reign of deceits; so puffing up man the more, who is eager for power more than righteousness, through the pride of elation, or through false philosophy; or else entangling him through sacrilegious rites, in which, while casting down headlong by deceit and illusion the minds of the more curious and prouder sort, he holds him captive also to magical trickery; promising too the cleansing of the soul, through those initiations which they call teletai, by transforming himself into an angel of light, through divers machinations in signs and prodigies of lying.

## CHAPTER 11

MIRACLES WHICH ARE DONE BY DEMONS ARE TO BE SPURNED

14. For it is easy for the most worthless spirits to do many things by means of aerial bodies, such as to cause wonder to souls which are weighed down by earthly bodies, even though they be of the better inclined. For if earthly

bodies themselves, when trained by a certain skill and practice, exhibit to men so great marvels in theatrical spectacles, that they who never saw such things scarcely believe them when told; why should it be hard for the devil and his angels to make out of corporeal elements, through their own aerial bodies, things at which the flesh marvels; or even by hidden inspirations to contrive fantastic appearances to the deluding of men's senses, whereby to deceive them, whether awake or asleep, or to drive them into frenzy? But just as it may happen that one who is better than they in life and character may gaze at the most worthless of men, either walking on a rope, or doing by various motions of the body many things difficult of belief, and yet he may not at all desire to do such things, nor think those men on that account to be preferred to himself; so the faithful and pious soul, not only if it sees, but even if on account of the frailty of the flesh it shudders at, the miracles of demons; yet will not for that either deplore its own want of power to do such things, or judge them on this account to be better than itself; especially since it is in the company of the holy, who, whether they are men or good angels, accomplish, through the power of God, to whom all things are subject, wonders which are far greater and the very reverse of deceptive.

## CHAPTER 12

### THE DEVIL THE MEDIATOR OF DEATH, CHRIST OF LIFE

15. In no wise therefore are souls cleansed and reconciled to God by sacrilegious imitations, or curious arts that are impious, or magical incantations; since the false mediator does not translate them to higher things, but rather blocks and cuts off the way thither through the affections, malignant in proportion as they are proud, which he inspires into those of his own company; which are not able to nourish the wings of virtues so as to fly upwards, but rather to heap up the weight of vices so as to press downwards; since the soul will fall down the more heavily, the more it seems to itself to have been carried upwards. Accordingly, as the Magi did when warned of God, whom the star led to adore the low estate of the Lord; so we also ought to return to our country, not by the way by which we came, but by another way which the lowly King has taught, and which the proud king, the adversary of that lowly King, cannot block up. For to us, too, that we may adore the lowly Christ, the "heavens have declared the

glory of God, when their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.” A way was made for us to death through sin in Adam. For, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.” Of this way the devil was the mediator, the persuader to sin, and the caster down into death. For he, too, applied his one death to work out our double death. Since he indeed died in the spirit through ungodliness, but certainly did not die in the flesh: yet both persuaded us to ungodliness, and thereby brought it to pass that we deserved to come into the death of the flesh. We desired therefore the one through wicked persuasion, the other followed us by a just condemnation; and therefore it is written, “God made not death,” since He was not Himself the cause of death; but yet death was inflicted on the sinner, through His most just retribution. Just as the judge inflicts punishment on the guilty; yet it is not the justice of the judge, but the desert of the crime, which is the cause of the punishment. Whither, then, the mediator of death caused us to pass, yet did not come himself, that is, to the death of the flesh, there our Lord God introduced for us the medicine of correction, which He deserved not, by a hidden and exceeding mysterious decree of divine and profound justice. In order, therefore, that as by one man came death, so by one man might come also the resurrection of the dead; because men strove more to shun that which they could not shun, viz. the death of the flesh, than the death of the spirit, i.e. punishment more than the desert of punishment (for not to sin is a thing about which either men are not solicitous or are too little solicitous; but not to die, although it be not within reach of attainment, is yet eagerly sought after); the Mediator of life, making it plain that death is not to be feared, which by the condition of humanity cannot now be escaped, but rather ungodliness, which can be guarded against through faith, meets us at the end to which we have come, but not by the way by which we came. For we, indeed, came to death through sin; He through righteousness: and, therefore, as our death is the punishment of sin, so His death was made a sacrifice for sin.

## CHAPTER 13

THE DEATH OF CHRIST VOLUNTARY. HOW THE MEDIATOR OF LIFE SUBDUED THE MEDIATOR OF DEATH. HOW THE DEVIL LEADS HIS OWN TO DESPISE THE DEATH OF CHRIST

16. Wherefore, since the spirit is to be preferred to the body, and the death of the spirit means that God has left it, but the death of the body that the spirit has left it; and since herein lies the punishment in the death of the body, that the spirit leaves the body against its will, because it left God willingly; so that, whereas the spirit left God because it would, it leaves the body although it would not; nor leaves it when it would, unless it has offered violence to itself, whereby the body itself is slain: the spirit of the Mediator showed how it was through no punishment of sin that He came to the death of the flesh, because He did not leave it against His will, but because He willed, when He willed, as He willed. For because He is so commingled [with the flesh] by the Word of God as to be one, He says: "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay down my life that I might take it again." And, as the Gospel tells us, they who were present were most astonished at this, that after that [last] word, in which He set forth the figure of our sin, He immediately gave up His spirit. For they who are hung on the cross are commonly tortured by a prolonged death. Whence it was that the legs of the thieves were broken, in order that they might die directly, and be taken down from the cross before the Sabbath. And that He was found to be dead already, caused wonder. And it was this also, at which, as we read, Pilate marvelled, when the body of the Lord was asked of him for burial.

17. Because that deceiver then,—who was a mediator to death for man, and feignedly puts himself forward as to life, under the name of cleansing by sacrilegious rites and sacrifices, by which the proud are led away,—can neither share in our death, nor rise again from his own: he has indeed been able to apply his single death to our double one; but he certainly has not been able to apply a single resurrection, which should be at once a mystery of our renewal, and a type of that waking up which is to be in the end. He then who being alive in the spirit raised again His own flesh that was dead, the true Mediator of life, has cast out him, who is dead in the spirit and the mediator of death, from the spirits of those who believe in Himself, so that he should not reign within, but should assault from without, and yet not prevail. And to him, too, He offered Himself to be tempted, in order that He might be also a mediator to overcome his temptations, not only by succor, but also by example. But when the devil, from the first, although striving



through every entrance to creep into His inward parts, was thrust out, having finished all his alluring temptation in the wilderness after the baptism; because, being dead in the spirit, he forced no entrance into Him who was alive in the spirit, he betook himself, through eagerness for the death of man in any way whatsoever, to effecting that death which he could, and was permitted to effect it upon that mortal element which the living Mediator had received from us. And where he could do anything, there in every respect he was conquered; and wherein he received outwardly the power of slaying the Lord in the flesh, therein his inward power, by which he held ourselves, was slain. For it was brought to pass that the bonds of many sins in many deaths were loosed, through the one death of One which no sin had preceded. Which death, though not due, the Lord therefore rendered for us, that the death which was due might work us no hurt. For He was not stripped of the flesh by obligation of any authority, but He stripped Himself. For doubtless He who was able not to die, if He would not, did die because He would: and so He made a show of principalities and powers, openly triumphing over them in Himself. For whereas by His death the one and most real sacrifice was offered up for us, whatever fault there was, whence principalities and powers held us fast as of right to pay its penalty, He cleansed, abolished, extinguished; and by His own resurrection He also called us whom He predestinated to a new life; and whom He called, them He justified; and whom He justified, them He glorified. And so the devil, in that very death of the flesh, lost man, whom he was possessing as by an absolute right, seduced as he was by his own consent, and over whom he ruled, himself impeded by no corruption of flesh and blood, through that frailty of man's mortal body, whence he was both too poor and too weak; he who was proud in proportion as he was, as it were, both richer and stronger, ruling over him who was, as it were, both clothed in rags and full of troubles. For whither he drove the sinner to fall, himself not following, there by following he compelled the Redeemer to descend. And so the Son of God deigned to become our friend in the fellowship of death, to which because he came not, the enemy thought himself to be better and greater than ourselves. For our Redeemer says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Wherefore also the devil thought himself superior to the Lord Himself, inasmuch as the Lord in His sufferings yielded to him; for of Him, too, is understood what is read in

the Psalm, “For Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels:” so that He, being Himself put to death, although innocent, by the unjust one acting against us as it were by just right, might by a most just right overcome him, and so might lead captive the captivity wrought through sin, and free us from a captivity that was just on account of sin, by blotting out the handwriting, and redeeming us who were to be justified although sinners, through His own righteous blood unrighteously poured out.

18. Hence also the devil mocks those who are his own until this very day, to whom he presents himself as a false mediator, as though they would be cleansed or rather entangled and drowned by his rites, in that he very easily persuades the proud to ridicule and despise the death of Christ, from which the more he himself is estranged, the more is he believed by them to be the holier and more divine. Yet those who have remained with him are very few, since the nations acknowledge and with pious humility imbibe the price paid for themselves, and in trust upon it abandon their enemy, and gather together to their Redeemer. For the devil does not know how the most excellent wisdom of God makes use of both his snares and his fury to bring about the salvation of His own faithful ones, beginning from the former end, which is the beginning of the spiritual creature, even to the latter end, which is the death of the body, and so “reaching from the one end to the other, mightily and sweetly ordering all things.” For wisdom “passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness, and no defiled thing can fall into her.” And since the devil has nothing to do with the death of the flesh, whence comes his exceeding pride, a death of another kind is prepared in the eternal fire of hell, by which not only the spirits that have earthly, but also those who have aerial bodies, can be tormented. But proud men, by whom Christ is despised, because He died, wherein He bought us with so great a price, both bring back the former death, and also men, to that miserable condition of nature, which is derived from the first sin, and will be cast down into the latter death with the devil. And they on this account preferred the devil to Christ, because the former cast them into that former death, whither he himself fell not through the difference of his nature, and whither on account of them Christ descended through His great mercy: and yet they do not hesitate to believe themselves better than the devils, and do not cease to assail and denounce them with every sort of

malediction, while they know them at any rate to have nothing to do with the suffering of this kind of death, on account of which they despise Christ. Neither will they take into account that the case may possibly be, that the Word of God, remaining in Himself, and in Himself in no way changeable, may yet, through the taking upon Him of a lower nature, be able to suffer somewhat of a lower kind, which the unclean spirit cannot suffer, because he has not an earthly body. And so, whereas they themselves are better than the devils, yet, because they bear a body of flesh, they can so die, as the devils certainly cannot die, who do not bear such a body. They presume much on the deaths of their own sacrifices, which they do not perceive that they sacrifice to deceitful and proud spirits; or if they have come to perceive it, think their friendship to be of some good to themselves, treacherous and envious although they are, whose purpose is bent upon nothing else except to hinder our return.

#### CHAPTER 14

CHRIST THE MOST PERFECT VICTIM FOR CLEANSING OUR FAULTS. IN EVERY SACRIFICE FOUR THINGS ARE TO BE CONSIDERED

19. They do not understand, that not even the proudest of spirits themselves could rejoice in the honor of sacrifices, unless a true sacrifice was due to the one true God, in whose stead they desire to be worshipped: and that this cannot be rightly offered except by a holy and righteous priest; nor unless that which is offered be received from those for whom it is offered; and unless also it be without fault, so that it may be offered for cleansing the faulty. This at least all desire who wish sacrifice to be offered for themselves to God. Who then is so righteous and holy a priest as the only Son of God, who had no need to purge His own sins by sacrifice, neither original sins, nor those which are added by human life? And what could be so fitly chosen by men to be offered for them as human flesh? And what so fit for this immolation as mortal flesh? And what so clean for cleansing the faults of mortal men as the flesh born in and from the womb of a virgin, without any infection of carnal concupiscence? And what could be so acceptably offered and taken, as the flesh of our sacrifice, made the body of our priest? In such wise that, whereas four things are to be considered in every sacrifice,—to whom it is offered, by whom it is offered, what is

offered, for whom it is offered,—the same One and true Mediator Himself, reconciling us to God by the sacrifice of peace, might remain one with Him to whom He offered, might make those one in Himself for whom He offered, Himself might be in one both the offerer and the offering.

#### CHAPTER 15

THEY ARE PROUD WHO THINK THEY ARE ABLE, BY THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, TO BE CLEANSED SO AS TO SEE GOD

20. There are, however, some who think themselves capable of being cleansed by their own righteousness, so as to contemplate God, and to dwell in God; whom their very pride itself stains above all others. For there is no sin to which the divine law is more opposed, and over which that proudest of spirits, who is a mediator to things below, but a barrier against things above, receives a greater right of mastery: unless either his secret snares be avoided by going another way, or if he rage openly by means of a sinful people (which Amalek, being interpreted, means), and forbid by fighting the passage to the land of promise, he be overcome by the cross of the Lord, which is prefigured by the holding out of the hands of Moses. For these persons promise themselves cleansing by their own righteousness for this reason, because some of them have been able to penetrate with the eye of the mind beyond the whole creature, and to touch, though it be in ever so small a part, the light of the unchangeable truth; a thing which they deride many Christians for being not yet able to do, who, in the meantime, live by faith alone. But of what use is it for the proud man, who on that account is ashamed to embark upon the ship of wood, to behold from afar his country beyond the sea? Or how can it hurt the humble man not to behold it from so great a distance, when he is actually coming to it by that wood upon which the other disdains to be borne?

#### CHAPTER 16

THE OLD PHILOSOPHERS ARE NOT TO BE CONSULTED CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION AND CONCERNING THINGS TO COME

21. These people also blame us for believing the resurrection of the flesh, and rather wish us to believe themselves concerning these things. As

though, because they have been able to understand the high and unchangeable substance by the things which are made, for this reason they had a claim to be consulted concerning the revolutions of mutable things, or concerning the connected order of the ages. For pray, because they dispute most truly, and persuade us by most certain proofs, that all things temporal are made after a science that is eternal, are they therefore able to see clearly in the matter of this science itself, or to collect from it, how many kinds of animals there are, what are the seeds of each in their beginnings, what measure in their increase, what numbers run through their conceptions, births, ages, settings; what motions in desiring things according to their nature, and in avoiding the contrary? Have they not sought out all these things, not through that unchangeable wisdom, but through the actual history of places and times, or have trusted the written experience of others? Wherefore it is the less to be wondered at, that they have utterly failed in searching out the succession of more lengthened ages, and in finding any goal of that course, down which, as though down a river, the human race is sailing, and the transition thence of each to its own appropriate end. For these are subjects which historians could not describe, inasmuch as they are far in the future, and have been experienced and related by no one. Nor have those philosophers, who have profited better than others in that high and eternal science, been able to grasp such subjects with the understanding; otherwise they would not be inquiring as they could into past things of the kind, such as are in the province of historians, but rather would foreknow also things future; and those who are able to do this are called by them soothsayers, but by us prophets:

## CHAPTER 17

IN HOW MANY WAYS THINGS FUTURE ARE FOREKNOWN. NEITHER PHILOSOPHERS, NOR THOSE WHO WERE DISTINGUISHED AMONG THE ANCIENTS, ARE TO BE CONSULTED CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

22.—although the name of prophets, too, is not altogether foreign to their writings. But it makes the greatest possible difference, whether things future are conjectured by experience of things past (as physicians also have committed many things to writing in the way of foresight, which they themselves have noted by experience; or as again husbandmen, or sailors,

too, foretell many things; for if such predictions are made a long while before, they are thought to be divinations), or whether such things have already started on their road to come to us, and being seen coming far off, are announced in proportion to the acuteness of the sense of those who see them, by doing which the aerial powers are thought to divine (just as if a person from the top of a mountain were to see far off some one coming, and were to announce it beforehand to those who dwelt close by in the plain); or whether they are either fore-announced to certain men, or are heard by them and again transmitted to other men, by means of holy angels, to whom God shows those things by His Word and His Wisdom, wherein both things future and things past consist: or whether the minds of certain men themselves are so far borne upwards by the Holy Spirit, as to behold, not through the angels, but of themselves, the immoveable causes of things future, in that very highest pinnacle of the universe itself. [And I say, behold,] for the aerial powers, too, hear these things, either by message through angels, or through men; and hear only so much as He judges to be fitting, to whom all things are subject. Many things, too, are foretold by a kind of instinct and inward impulse of such as know them not: as Caiaphas did not know what he said, but being the high priest, he prophesied.

23. Therefore, neither concerning the successions of ages, nor concerning the resurrection of the dead, ought we to consult those philosophers, who have understood as much as they could the eternity of the Creator, in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.” Since, knowing God through those things which are made, they have not glorified Him as God, neither were thankful but professing themselves wise, they became fools. And whereas they were not fit to fix the eye of the mind so firmly upon the eternity of the spiritual and unchangeable nature, as to be able to see, in the wisdom itself of the Creator and Governor of the universe, those revolutions of the ages, which in that wisdom were already and were always, but here were about to be so that as yet they were not; or, again, to see therein those changes for the better, not of the souls only, but also of the bodies of men, even to the perfection of their proper measure; whereas then, I say, they were in no way fit to see these things therein, they were not even judged worthy of receiving any announcement of them by the holy angels; whether externally through the senses of the body, or by interior revelations

exhibited in the spirit; as these things actually were manifested to our fathers, who were gifted with true piety, and who by foretelling them, obtaining credence either by present signs, or by events close at hand, which turned out as they had foretold, earned authority to be believed respecting things remotely future, even to the end of the world. But the proud and deceitful powers of the air, even if they are found to have said through their soothsayers some things of the fellowship and citizenship of the saints, and of the true Mediator, which they heard from the holy prophets or the angels, did so with the purpose of seducing even the faithful ones of God, if they could, by these alien truths, to revolt to their own proper falsehoods. But God did this by those who knew not what they said, in order that the truth might sound abroad from all sides, to aid the faithful, to be a witness against the ungodly.

## CHAPTER 18

THE SON OF GOD BECAME INCARNATE IN ORDER THAT WE BEING CLEANSED BY FAITH MAY BE RAISED TO THE UNCHANGEABLE TRUTH

24. Since, then, we were not fit to take hold of things eternal, and since the foulness of sins weighed us down, which we had contracted by the love of temporal things, and which were implanted in us as it were naturally, from the root of mortality, it was needful that we should be cleansed. But cleansed we could not be, so as to be tempered together with things eternal, except it were through things temporal, wherewith we were already tempered together and held fast. For health is at the opposite extreme from disease; but the intermediate process of healing does not lead us to perfect health, unless it has some congruity with the disease. Things temporal that are useless merely deceive the sick; things temporal that are useful take up those that need healing, and pass them on healed, to things eternal. And the rational mind, as when cleansed it owes contemplation to things eternal; so, when needing cleansing, owes faith to things temporal. One even of those who were formerly esteemed wise men among the Greeks has said, The truth stands to faith in the same relation in which eternity stands to that which has a beginning. And he is no doubt right in saying so. For what we call temporal, he describes as having had a beginning. And we also ourselves come under this kind, not only in respect to the body, but also in

respect to the changeableness of the soul. For that is not properly called eternal which undergoes any degree of change. Therefore, in so far as we are changeable, in so far we stand apart from eternity. But life eternal is promised to us through the truth, from the clear knowledge of which, again, our faith stands as far apart as mortality does from eternity. We then now put faith in things done in time on our account, and by that faith itself we are cleansed; in order that when we have come to sight, as truth follows faith, so eternity may follow upon mortality. And therefore, since our faith will become truth, when we have attained to that which is promised to us who believe: and that which is promised us is eternal life; and the Truth (not that which shall come to be according as our faith shall be, but that truth which is always, because in it is eternity,—the Truth then) has said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent:” when our faith by seeing shall come to be truth, then eternity shall possess our now changed mortality. And until this shall take place, and in order that it may take place,—because we adapt the faith of belief to things which have a beginning, as in things eternal we hope for the truth of contemplation, lest the faith of mortal life should be at discord with the truth of eternal life,—the Truth itself, co-eternal with the Father, took a beginning from earth, when the Son of God so came as to become the Son of man, and to take to Himself our faith, that He might thereby lead us on to His own truth, who so undertook our mortality, as not to lose His own eternity. For truth stands to faith in the relation in which eternity stands to that which has a beginning. Therefore, we must needs so be cleansed, that we may come to have such a beginning as remains eternal, that we may not have one beginning in faith, and another in truth. Neither could we pass to things eternal from the condition of having a beginning, unless we were transferred, by union of the eternal to ourselves through our own beginning, to His own eternity. Therefore our faith has, in some measure, now followed thither, whither He in whom we have believed has ascended; born, dead, risen again, taken up. Of these four things, we knew the first two in ourselves. For we know that men both have a beginning and die. But the remaining two, that is, to be raised, and to be taken up, we rightly hope will be in us, because we have believed them done in Him. Since, therefore, in Him that, too, which had a beginning has passed over to eternity, in ourselves also it will so pass over, when faith shall have arrived



at truth. For to those who thus believe, in order that they might remain in the word of faith, and being thence led on to the truth, and through that to eternity, might be freed from death, He speaks thus: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." And as though they would ask, With what fruit? He proceeds to say, "And ye shall know the truth." And again, as though they would say, Of what good is truth to mortal men? "And the truth," He says, "shall make you free." From what, except from death, from corruptions, from changeableness? Since truth remains immortal, incorrupt, unchangeable. But true immortality, true incorruptibility, true unchangeableness, is eternity itself.

#### CHAPTER 19

IN WHAT MANNER THE SON WAS SENT AND PROCLAIMED BEFOREHAND. HOW IN THE SENDING OF HIS BIRTH IN THE FLESH HE WAS MADE LESS WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO HIS EQUALITY WITH THE FATHER

25. Behold, then, why the Son of God was sent; nay, rather behold what it is for the Son of God to be sent. Whatever things they were which were wrought in time, with a view to produce faith, whereby we might be cleansed so as to contemplate truth, in things that have a beginning, which have been put forth from eternity, and are referred back to eternity: these were either testimonies of this mission, or they were the mission itself of the Son of God. But some of these testimonies announced Him beforehand as to come, some testified that He had come already. For that He was made a creature by whom the whole creation was made, must needs find a witness in the whole creation. For except one were preached by the sending of many [witnesses] one would not be bound to, the sending away of many. And unless there were such testimonies as should seem to be great to those who are lowly, it would not be believed, that He being great should make men great, who as lowly was sent to the lowly. For the heaven and the earth and all things in them are incomparably greater works of the Son of God, since all things were made by Him, than the signs and the portents which broke forth in testimony of Him. But yet men, in order that, being lowly, they might believe these great things to have been wrought by Him, trembled at those lowly things, as if they had been great.

26. “When, therefore, the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law;” to such a degree lowly, that He was “made;” in this way therefore sent, in that He was made. If, therefore, the greater sends the less, we too, acknowledge Him to have been made less; and in so far less, in so far as made; and in so far made, in so far as sent. For “He sent forth His Son made of a woman.” And yet, because all things were made by Him, not only before He was made and sent, but before all things were at all, we confess the same to be equal to the sender, whom we call less, as having been sent. In what way, then, could He be seen by the fathers, when certain angelical visions were shown to them, before that fullness of time at which it was fitting He should be sent, and so before He was sent, at a time when not yet sent He was seen as He is equal with the Father? For how does He say to Philip, by whom He was certainly seen as by all the rest, and even by those by whom He was crucified in the flesh, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also;” unless because He was both seen and yet not seen? He was seen, as He had been made in being sent; He was not seen, as by Him all things were made. Or how does He say this too, “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him,” at a time when He was manifest before the eyes of men; unless because He was offering that flesh, which the Word was made in the fullness of time, to be accepted by our faith; but was keeping back the Word itself, by whom all things were made, to be contemplated in eternity by the mind when cleansed by faith?

## CHAPTER 20

THE SENDER AND THE SENT EQUAL. WHY THE SON IS SAID TO BE SENT BY THE FATHER. OF THE MISSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. HOW AND BY WHOM HE WAS SENT. THE FATHER THE BEGINNING OF THE WHOLE GODHEAD

27. But if the Son is said to be sent by the Father on this account, that the one is the Father, and the other the Son, this does not in any manner hinder us from believing the Son to be equal, and consubstantial, and co-eternal with the Father, and yet to have been sent as Son by the Father. Not because the one is greater, the other less; but because the one is Father, the other

Son; the one begetter, the other begotten; the one, He from whom He is who is sent; the other, He who is from Him who sends. For the Son is from the Father, not the Father from the Son. And according to this manner we can now understand that the Son is not only said to have been sent because “the Word was made flesh,” but therefore sent that the Word might be made flesh, and that He might perform through His bodily presence those things which were written; that is, that not only is He understood to have been sent as man, which the Word was made but the Word, too, was sent that it might be made man; because He was not sent in respect to any inequality of power, or substance, or anything that in Him was not equal to the Father; but in respect to this, that the Son is from the Father, not the Father from the Son; for the Son is the Word of the Father, which is also called His wisdom. What wonder, therefore, if He is sent, not because He is unequal with the Father, but because He is “a pure emanation (manatio) issuing from the glory of the Almighty God?” For there, that which issues, and that from which it issues, is of one and the same substance. For it does not issue as water issues from an aperture of earth or of stone, but as light issues from light. For the words, “For she is the brightness of the everlasting light,” what else are they than, she is light of everlasting light? For what is the brightness of light, except light itself? and so co-eternal, with the light, from which the light is. But it is preferable to say, “the brightness of light,” rather than “the light of light;” lest that which issues should be thought to be darker than that from which it issues. For when one hears of the brightness of light as being light itself, it is more easy to believe that the former shines by means of the latter, than that the latter shines less. But because there was no need of warning men not to think that light to be less, which begat the other (for no heretic ever dared say this, neither is it to be believed that any one will dare to do so), Scripture meets that other thought, whereby that light which issues might seem darker than that from which it issues; and it has removed this surmise by saying, “It is the brightness of that light,” namely, of eternal light, and so shows it to be equal. For if it were less, then it would be its darkness, not its brightness; but if it were greater, then it could not issue from it, for it could not surpass that from which it is educed. Therefore, because it issues from it, it is not greater than it is; and because it is not its darkness, but its brightness, it is not less than it is: therefore it is equal. Nor ought this to trouble us, that it is called a pure emanation issuing

from the glory of the Almighty God, as if itself were not omnipotent, but an emanation from the Omnipotent; for soon after it is said of it, “And being but one, she can do all things.” But who is omnipotent, unless He who can do all things? It is sent, therefore, by Him from whom it issues; for so she is sought after by him who loved and desired her. “Send her,” he says, “out of Thy holy heavens, and from the throne of Thy glory, that, being present, she may labor with me;” that is, may teach me to labor [heartily] in order that I may not labor [irksomely]. For her labors are virtues. But she is sent in one way that she may be with man; she has been sent in another way that she herself may be man. For, “entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets;” so she also fills the holy angels, and works all things fitting for such ministries by them. But when the fullness of time was come, she was sent, not to fill angels, nor to be an angel, except in so far as she announced the counsel of the Father, which was her own also; nor, again, to be with men or in men, for this too took place before, both in the fathers and in the prophets; but that the Word itself should be made flesh, that is, should be made man. In which future mystery, when revealed, was to be the salvation of those wise and holy men also, who, before He was born of the Virgin, were born of women; and in which, when done and made known, is the salvation of all who believe, and hope, and love. For this is “the great mystery of godliness, which was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

28. Therefore the Word of God is sent by Him, of whom He is the Word; He is sent by Him, from whom He was begotten (genitum); He sends who begot, That is sent which is begotten. And He is then sent to each one, when He is apprehended and perceived by each, in so far as He can be apprehended and perceived, in proportion to the comprehension of the rational soul, either advancing towards God, or already perfect in God. The Son, therefore, is not properly said to have been sent in that He is begotten of the Father; but either in that the Word made flesh appeared to the world, whence He says, “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world;” or in that from time to time, He is perceived by the mind of each, according to the saying, “Send her, that, being present with me, she may labor with me.” What then is born (natum) from eternity is eternal, “for it is

the brightness of the everlasting light;" but what is sent from time to time, is that which is apprehended by each. But when the Son of God was made manifest in the flesh, He was sent into this world in the fullness of time, made of a woman. "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God" (since "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not"), it "pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," and that the Word should be made flesh, and dwell among us. But when from time to time He comes forth and is perceived by the mind of each, He is said indeed to be sent, but not into this world; for He does not appear sensibly, that is, He does not present Himself to the corporeal senses. For we ourselves, too, are not in this world, in respect to our grasping with the mind as far as we can that which is eternal; and the spirits of all the righteous are not in this world, even of those who are still living in the flesh, in so far as they have discernment in things divine. But the Father is not said to be sent, when from time to time He is apprehended by any one, for He has no one of whom to be, or from whom to proceed; since Wisdom says, "I came out of the mouth of the Most High," and it is said of the Holy Spirit, "He proceedeth from the Father," but the Father is from no one.

29. As, therefore, the Father begat, the Son is begotten; so the Father sent, the Son was sent. But in like manner as He who begat and He who was begotten, so both He who sent and He who was sent, are one, since the Father and the Son are one. So also the Holy Spirit is one with them, since these three are one. For as to be born, in respect to the Son, means to be from the Father; so to be sent, in respect to the Son, means to be known to be from the Father. And as to be the gift of God in respect to the Holy Spirit, means to proceed from the Father; so to be sent, is to be known to proceed from the Father. Neither can we say that the Holy Spirit does not also proceed from the Son, for the same Spirit is not without reason said to be the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. Nor do I see what else He intended to signify, when He breathed on the face of the disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." For that bodily breathing, proceeding from the body with the feeling of bodily touching, was not the substance of the Holy Spirit, but a declaration by a fitting sign, that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son. For the veriest of madmen

would not say, that it was one Spirit which He gave when He breathed on them, and another which He sent after His ascension. For the Spirit of God is one, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, the Holy Spirit, who worketh all in all. But that He was given twice was certainly a significant economy, which we will discuss in its place, as far as the Lord may grant. That then which the Lord says,—“Whom I will send unto you from the Father,”—shows the Spirit to be both of the Father and of the Son; because, also, when He had said, “Whom the Father will send,” He added also, “in my name.” Yet He did not say, Whom the Father will send from me, as He said, “Whom I will send unto you from the Father,”—showing, namely, that the Father is the beginning (principium) of the whole divinity, or if it is better so expressed, deity. He, therefore, who proceeds from the Father and from the Son, is referred back to Him from whom the Son was born (natus). And that which the evangelist says, “For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified;” how is this to be understood, unless because the special giving or sending of the Holy Spirit after the glorification of Christ was to be such as it had never been before? For it was not previously none at all, but it had not been such as this. For if the Holy Spirit was not given before, wherewith were the prophets who spoke filled? Whereas the Scripture plainly says, and shows in many places, that they spake by the Holy Spirit. Whereas, also, it is said of John the Baptist, “And he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb.” And his father Zacharias is found to have been filled with the Holy Ghost, so as to say such things of him. And Mary, too, was filled with the Holy Ghost, so as to foretell such things of the Lord, whom she was bearing in her womb. And Simeon and Anna were filled with the Holy Spirit, so as to acknowledge the greatness of the little child Christ. How, then, was “the Spirit not yet given, since Jesus was not yet glorified,” unless because that giving, or granting, or mission of the Holy Spirit was to have a certain speciality of its own in its very advent, such as never was before? For we read nowhere that men spoke in tongues which they did not know, through the Holy Spirit coming upon them; as happened then, when it was needful that His coming should be made plain by visible signs, in order to show that the whole world, and all nations constituted with different tongues, should believe in Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit, to fulfill that which is sung in the Psalm, “There is no speech nor language where their voice is

not heard; their sound is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”

30. Therefore man was united, and in some sense commingled, with the Word of God, so as to be One Person, when the fullness of time was come, and the Son of God, made of a woman, was sent into this world, that He might be also the Son of man for the sake of the sons of men. And this person angelic nature could prefigure beforehand, so as to pre-announce, but could not appropriate, so as to be that person itself.

## CHAPTER 21

OF THE SENSIBLE SHOWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND OF THE COETERNITY OF THE TRINITY. WHAT HAS BEEN SAID, AND WHAT REMAINS TO BE SAID

But with respect to the sensible showing of the Holy Spirit, whether by the shape of a dove, or by fiery tongues, when the subjected and subservient creature by temporal motions and forms manifested His substance co-eternal with the Father and the Son, and alike with them unchangeable, while it was not united so as to be one person with Him, as the flesh was which the Word was made; I do not dare to say that nothing of the kind was done aforetime. But I would boldly say, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, of one and the same substance, God the Creator, the Omnipotent Trinity, work indivisibly; but that this cannot be indivisibly manifested by the creature, which is far inferior, and least of all by the bodily creature: just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cannot be named by our words, which certainly are bodily sounds, except in their own proper intervals of time, divided by a distinct separation, which intervals the proper syllables of each word occupy. Since in their proper substance wherein they are, the three are one, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the very same, by no temporal motion, above the whole creature, without any interval of time and place, and at once one and the same from eternity to eternity, as it were eternity itself, which is not without truth and charity. But, in my words, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are separated, and cannot be named at once, and occupy their own proper places separately invisible letters. And as, when I name my memory, and intellect, and will, each name refers to each severally, but yet each is uttered by all three; for there is no one of these

three names that is not uttered by both my memory and my intellect and my will together [by the soul as a whole]; so the Trinity together wrought both the voice of the Father, and the flesh of the Son, and the dove of the Holy Spirit, while each of these things is referred severally to each person. And by this similitude it is in some degree discernible, that the Trinity, which is inseparable in itself, is manifested separably by the appearance of the visible creature; and that the operation of the Trinity is also inseparable in each severally of those things which are said to pertain properly to the manifesting of either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit.

31. If then I am asked, in what manner either words or sensible forms and appearances were wrought before the incarnation of the Word of God, which should prefigure it as about to come, I reply that God wrought those things by the angels; and this I have also shown sufficiently, as I think, by testimonies of the Holy Scriptures. And if I am asked how the incarnation itself was brought to pass, I reply that the Word of God itself was made flesh, that is, was made man, yet not turned and changed into that which was made; but so made, that there should be there not only the Word of God and the flesh of man, but also the rational soul of man, and that this whole should both be called God on account of God, and man on account of man. And if this is understood with difficulty, the mind must be purged by faith, by more and more abstaining from sins, and by doing good works, and by praying with the groaning of holy desires; that by profiting through the divine help, it may both understand and love. And if I am asked, how, after the incarnation of the Word, either a voice of the Father was produced, or a corporeal appearance by which the Holy Spirit was manifested: I do not doubt indeed that this was done through the creature; but whether only corporeal and sensible, or whether by the employment also of the spirit rational or intellectual (for this is the term by which some choose to call what the Greeks name *noeron*), not certainly so as to form one person (for who could possibly say that whatever creature it was by which the voice of the Father sounded, is in such sense God the Father; or whatever creature it was by which the Holy Spirit was manifested in the form of a dove, or in fiery tongues, is in such sense the Holy Spirit, as the Son of God is that man who was made of a virgin?), but only to the ministry of bringing about such intimations as God judged needful; or whether anything else is to be



understood: is difficult to discover, and not expedient rashly to affirm. Yet I see not how those things could have been brought to pass without the rational or intellectual creature. But it is not yet the proper place to explain, as the Lord may give me strength, why I so think; for the arguments of heretics must first be discussed and refuted, which they do not produce from the divine books, but from their own reasons, and by which, as they think, they forcibly compel us so to understand the testimonies of the Scriptures which treat of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as they themselves will.

32. But now, as I think, it has been sufficiently shown, that the Son is not therefore less because He is sent by the Father, nor the Holy Spirit less because both the Father sent Him and the Son. For these things are perceived to be laid down in the Scriptures, either on account of the visible creature; or rather on account of commending to our thoughts the emanation [within the Godhead]; but not on account of inequality, or imparity, or unlikeness of substance; since, even if God the Father had willed to appear visibly through the subject creature, yet it would be most absurd to say that He was sent either by the Son, whom He begot, or by the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from Him. Let this, therefore, be the limit of the present book. Henceforth in the rest we shall see, the Lord helping, of what sort are those crafty arguments of the heretics, and in what manner they may be confuted.

# Book V

Proceeds to treat of the arguments put forward by the heretics, not from Scripture, but from their own reason. Those are refuted, who think the substance of the Father and of the Son to be not the same, because everything predicated of God is, in their opinion, predicated of Him according to substance; and therefore it follows, that to beget and to be begotten, or to be begotten and unbegotten, being diverse, are diverse substances; whereas it is here demonstrated that not everything predicated of God is predicated according to substance, in such manner as He is called good and great according to substance, or anything else that is predicated of Him in respect to Himself; but that some things are also predicated of Him relatively, i.e. not in respect to Himself, but to something not Himself, as He is called Father in respect to the Son, and Lord in respect to the creature that serveth Him; in which case, if anything thus predicated relatively, i.e. in respect to something not Himself, is even predicated as happening in time, as e.g. “Lord, thou hast become our refuge,” yet nothing happens to God so as to work a change in Him, but He Himself remains absolutely unchangeable in His own nature or essence.

## CHAPTER 1

WHAT THE AUTHOR ENTREATS FROM GOD, WHAT FROM THE READER. IN GOD NOTHING IS TO BE THOUGHT CORPOREAL OR CHANGEABLE

1. Beginning, as I now do henceforward, to speak of subjects which cannot altogether be spoken as they are thought, either by any man, or, at any rate, not by myself; although even our very thought, when we think of God the Trinity, falls (as we feel) very far short of Him of whom we think, nor comprehends Him as He is; but He is seen, as it is written, even by those who are so great as was the Apostle Paul, “through a glass and in an enigma:” first, I pray to our Lord God Himself, of whom we ought always

to think, and of whom we are not able to think worthily, in praise of whom blessing is at all times to be rendered, and whom no speech is sufficient to declare, that He will grant me both help for understanding and explaining that which I design, and pardon if in anything I offend. For I bear in mind, not only my desire, but also my infirmity. I ask also of my readers to pardon me, where they may perceive me to have had the desire rather than the power to speak, what they either understand better themselves, or fail to understand through the obscurity of my language, just as I myself pardon them what they cannot understand through their own dullness.

2. And we shall mutually pardon one another the more easily, if we know, or at any rate firmly believe and hold, that whatever is said of a nature, unchangeable, invisible and having life absolutely and sufficient to itself, must not be measured after the custom of things visible, and changeable, and mortal, or not self-sufficient. But although we labor, and yet fail, to grasp and know even those things which are within the scope of our corporeal senses, or what we are ourselves in the inner man; yet it is with no shamelessness that faithful piety burns after those divine and unspeakable things which are above: piety, I say, not inflated by the arrogance of its own power, but inflamed by the grace of its Creator and Saviour Himself. For with what understanding can man apprehend God, who does not yet apprehend that very understanding itself of his own, by which he desires to apprehend Him? And if he does already apprehend this, let him carefully consider that there is nothing in his own nature better than it; and let him see whether he can there see any outlines of forms, or brightness of colors, or greatness of space, or distance of parts, or extension of size, or any movements through intervals of place, or any such thing at all. Certainly we find nothing of all this in that, than which we find nothing better in our own nature, that is, in our own intellect, by which we apprehend wisdom according to our capacity. What, therefore, we do not find in that which is our own best, we ought not to seek in Him who is far better than that best of ours; that so we may understand God, if we are able, and as much as we are able, as good without quality, great without quantity, a creator though He lack nothing, ruling but from no position, sustaining all things without “having” them, in His wholeness everywhere, yet without place, eternal without time, making things that are changeable, without

change of Himself, and without passion. Whoso thus thinks of God, although he cannot yet find out in all ways what He is, yet piously takes heed, as much as he is able, to think nothing of Him that He is not.

## CHAPTER 2

### GOD THE ONLY UNCHANGEABLE ESSENCE

3. He is, however, without doubt, a substance, or, if it be better so to call it, an essence, which the Greeks call ousia. For as wisdom is so called from the being wise, and knowledge from knowing; so from being comes that which we call essence. And who is there that is, more than He who said to His servant Moses, “I am that I am;” and, “Thus shall thou say unto the children of Israel, He who is hath sent me unto you?” But other things that are called essences or substances admit of accidents, whereby a change, whether great or small, is produced in them. But there can be no accident of this kind in respect to God; and therefore He who is God is the only unchangeable substance or essence, to whom certainly being itself, whence comes the name of essence, most especially and most truly belongs. For that which is changed does not retain its own being; and that which can be changed, although it be not actually changed, is able not to be that which it had been; and hence that which not only is not changed, but also cannot at all be changed, alone falls most truly, without difficulty or hesitation, under the category of being.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE ARGUMENT OF THE ARIANS IS REFUTED, WHICH IS DRAWN FROM THE WORDS BEGOTTEN AND UNBEGOTTEN

4. Wherefore,—to being now to answer the adversaries of our faith, respecting those things also, which are neither said as they are thought, nor thought as they really are:—among the many things which the Arians are wont to dispute against the Catholic faith, they seem chiefly to set forth this, as their most crafty device, namely, that whatsoever is said or understood of God, is said not according to accident, but according to substance, and therefore, to be unbegotten belongs to the Father according to substance, and to be begotten belongs to the Son according to substance; but to be

unbegotten and to be begotten are different; therefore the substance of the Father and that of the Son are different. To whom we reply, If whatever is spoken of God is spoken according to substance, then that which is said, “I and the Father are one,” is spoken according to substance. Therefore there is one substance of the Father and the Son. Or if this is not said according to substance, then something is said of God not according to substance, and therefore we are no longer compelled to understand unbegotten and begotten according to substance. It is also said of the Son, “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” We ask, equal according to what? For if He is not said to be equal according to substance, then they admit that something may be said of God not according to substance. Let them admit, then, that unbegotten and begotten are not spoken according to substance. And if they do not admit this, on the ground that they will have all things to be spoken of God according to substance, then the Son is equal to the Father according to substance.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### THE ACCIDENTAL ALWAYS IMPLIES SOME CHANGE IN THE THING

5. That which is accidental commonly implies that it can be lost by some change of the thing to which it is an accident. For although some accidents are said to be inseparable, which in Greek are called *achorista*, as the color black is to the feather of a raven; yet the feather loses that color, not indeed so long as it is a feather, but because the feather is not always. Wherefore the matter itself is changeable; and whenever that animal or that feather ceases to be, and the whole of that body is changed and turned into earth, it loses certainly that color also. Although the kind of accident which is called separable may likewise be lost, not by separation, but by change; as, for instance, blackness is called a separable accident to the hair of men, because hair continuing to be hair can grow white; yet, if carefully considered, it is sufficiently apparent, that it is not as if anything departed by separation away from the head when it grows white, as though blackness departed thence and went somewhere and whiteness came in its place, but that the quality of color there is turned and changed. Therefore there is nothing accidental in God, because there is nothing changeable or that may be lost. But if you choose to call that also accidental, which, although it

may not be lost, yet can be decreased or increased,—as, for instance, the life of the soul: for as long as it is a soul, so long it lives, and because the soul is always, it always lives; but because it lives more when it is wise, and less when it is foolish, here, too, some change comes to pass, not such that life is absent, as wisdom is absent to the foolish, but such that it is less;—nothing of this kind, either, happens to God, because He remains altogether unchangeable.

## CHAPTER 5

### NOTHING IS SPOKEN OF GOD ACCORDING TO ACCIDENT, BUT ACCORDING TO SUBSTANCE OR ACCORDING TO RELATION

6. Wherefore nothing in Him is said in respect to accident, since nothing is accidental to Him, and yet all that is said is not said according to substance. For in created and changeable things, that which is not said according to substance, must, by necessary alternative, be said according to accident. For all things are accidents to them, which can be either lost or diminished, whether magnitudes or qualities; and so also is that which is said in relation to something, as friendships, relationships, services, likenesses, equalities, and anything else of the kind; so also positions and conditions, places and times, acts and passions. But in God nothing is said to be according to accident, because in Him nothing is changeable; and yet everything that is said, is not said, according to substance. For it is said in relation to something, as the Father in relation to the Son and the Son in relation to the Father, which is not accident; because both the one is always Father, and the other is always Son: yet not “always,” meaning from the time when the Son was born [natus], so that the Father ceases not to be the Father because the Son never ceases to be the Son, but because the Son was always born, and never began to be the Son. But if He had begun to be at any time, or were at any time to cease to be, the Son, then He would be called Son according to accident. But if the Father, in that He is called the Father, were so called in relation to Himself, not to the Son; and the Son, in that He is called the Son, were so called in relation to Himself, not to the Father; then both the one would be called Father, and the other Son, according to substance. But because the Father is not called the Father except in that He has a Son, and the Son is not called Son except in that He has a Father, these things are not

said according to substance; because each of them is not so called in relation to Himself, but the terms are used reciprocally and in relation each to the other; nor yet according to accident, because both the being called the Father, and the being called the Son, is eternal and unchangeable to them. Wherefore, although to be the Father and to be the Son is different, yet their substance is not different; because they are so called, not according to substance, but according to relation, which relation, however, is not accident, because it is not changeable.

## CHAPTER 6

REPLY IS MADE TO THE CAVILS OF THE HERETICS IN RESPECT TO THE SAME WORDS BEGOTTEN AND UNBEGOTTEN

7. But if they think they can answer this reasoning thus,—that the Father indeed is so called in relation to the Son, and the Son in relation to the Father, but that they are said to be unbegotten and begotten in relation to themselves, not in relation each to the other; for that it is not the same thing to call Him unbegotten as it is to call Him the Father, because there would be nothing to hinder our calling Him unbegotten even if He had not begotten the Son; and if any one beget a son, he is not therefore himself unbegotten, for men, who are begotten by other men, themselves also beget others; and therefore they say the Father is called Father in relation to the Son, and the Son is called Son in relation to the Father, but unbegotten is said in relation to Himself, and begotten in relation to Himself; and therefore, if whatever is said in relation to oneself is said according to substance, while to be unbegotten and to be begotten are different, then the substance is different:—if this is what they say, then they do not understand that they do indeed say something that requires more careful discussion in respect to the term unbegotten, because neither is any one therefore a father because unbegotten, nor therefore unbegotten because he is a father, and on that account he is supposed to be called unbegotten, not in relation to anything else, but in respect to himself; but, on the other hand, with a wonderful blindness, they do not perceive that no one can be said to be begotten except in relation to something. For he is therefore a son because begotten; and because a son, therefore certainly begotten. And as is the relation of son to father, so is the relation of the begotten to the begetter;

and as is the relation of father to son, so is the relation of the begetter to the begotten. And therefore any one is understood to be a begetter under one notion, but understood to be unbegotten under another. For though both are said of God the Father, yet the former is said in relation to the begotten, that is to the Son, which, indeed, they do not deny; but that He is called unbegotten, they declare to be said in respect to Himself. They say then, If anything is said to be a father in respect to itself, which cannot be said to be a son in respect to itself, and whatever is said in respect to self is said according to substance; and He is said to be unbegotten in respect to Himself, which the Son cannot be said to be; therefore He is said to be unbegotten according to substance; and because the Son cannot be so said to be, therefore He is not of the same substance. This subtlety is to be answered by compelling them to say themselves according to what it is that the Son is equal to the Father; whether according to that which is said in relation to Himself, or according to that which is said in relation to the Father. For it is not according to that which is said in relation to the Father, since in relation to the Father He is said to be Son, and the Father is not Son, but Father. Since Father and Son are not so called in relation to each other in the same way as friends and neighbors are; for a friend is so called relatively to his friend, and if they love each other equally, then the same friendship is in both; and a neighbor is so called relatively to a neighbor, and because they are equally neighbors to each other (for each is neighbor to the other, in the same degree as the other is neighbor to him), there is the same neighborhood in both. But because the Son is not so called relatively to the Son, but to the Father, it is not according to that which is said in relation to the Father that the Son is equal to the Father; and it remains that He is equal according to that which is said in relation to Himself. But whatever is said in relation to self is said according to substance: it remains therefore that He is equal according to substance; therefore the substance of both is the same. But when the Father is said to be unbegotten, it is not said what He is, but what He is not; and when a relative term is denied, it is not denied according to substance, since the relative itself is not affirmed according to substance.



## CHAPTER 7

### THE ADDITION OF A NEGATIVE DOES NOT CHANGE THE PREDICAMENT

8. This is to be made clear by examples. And first we must notice, that by the word begotten is signified the same thing as is signified by the word son. For therefore a son, because begotten, and because a son, therefore certainly begotten. By the word unbegotten, therefore, it is declared that he is not son. But begotten and unbegotten are both of them terms suitably employed; whereas in Latin we can use the word “filius,” but the custom of the language does not allow us to speak of “infilius.” It makes no difference, however, in the meaning if he is called “non filius;” just as it is precisely the same thing if he is called “non genitus,” instead of “ingenitus.” For so the terms of both neighbor and friend are used relatively, yet we cannot speak of “invicinus” as we can of “inimicus.” Wherefore, in speaking of this thing or that, we must not consider what the usage of our own language either allows or does not allow, but what clearly appears to be the meaning of the things themselves. Let us not therefore any longer call it unbegotten, although it can be so called in Latin; but instead of this let us call it not begotten, which means the same. Is this then anything else than saying that he is not a son? Now the prefixing of that negative particle does not make that to be said according to substance, which, without it, is said relatively; but that only is denied, which, without it, was affirmed, as in the other predicaments. When we say he is a man, we denote substance. He therefore who says he is not a man, enunciates no other kind of predicament, but only denies that. As therefore I affirm according to substance in saying he is a man, so I deny according to substance in saying he is not a man. And when the question is asked how large he is? and I say he is quadrupedal, that is, four feet in measure, I affirm according to quantity, and he who says he is not quadrupedal, denies according to quantity. I say he is white, I affirm according to quality; if I say he is not white, I deny according to quality. I say he is near, I affirm according to relation; if I say he is not near, I deny according to relation. I affirm according to position, when I say he lies down; I deny according to position, when I say he does not lie down. I speak according to condition, when I say he is armed; I deny according to condition, when I say he is not armed; and it comes to the same thing as if I should say he is unarmed. I

affirm according to time, when I say he is of yesterday; I deny according to time, when I say he is not of yesterday. And when I say he is at Rome, I affirm according to place; and I deny according to place, when I say he is not at Rome. I affirm according to the predicament of action, when I say he smites; but if I say he does not smite, I deny according to action, so as to declare that he does not so act. And when I say he is smitten, I affirm according to the predicament of passion; and I deny according to the same, when I say he is not smitten. And, in a word, there is no kind of predicament according to which we may please to affirm anything, without being proved to deny according to the same predicament, if we prefix the negative particle. And since this is so, if I were to affirm according to substance, in saying son, I should deny according to substance, in saying not son. But because I affirm relatively when I say he is a son, for I refer to the father; therefore I deny relatively if I say he is not a son, for I refer the same negation to the father, in that I wish to declare that he has not a parent. But if to be called son is precisely equivalent to the being called begotten (as we said before), then to be called not begotten is precisely equivalent to the being called not son. But we deny relatively when we say he is not son, therefore we deny relatively when we say he is not begotten. Further, what is unbegotten, unless not begotten? We do not escape, therefore, from the relative predicament, when he is called unbegotten. For as begotten is not said in relation to self, but in that he is of a begetter; so when one is called unbegotten, he is not so called in relation to himself, but it is declared that he is not of a begetter. Both meanings, however, turn upon the same predicament, which is called that of relation. But that which is asserted relatively does not denote substance, and accordingly, although begotten and unbegotten are diverse, they do not denote a different substance; because, as son is referred to father, and not son to not father, so it follows inevitably that begotten must be referred to begetter, and not-begotten to not-begetter.

## CHAPTER 8

WHATEVER IS SPOKEN OF GOD ACCORDING TO SUBSTANCE, IS SPOKEN OF EACH PERSON SEVERALLY, AND TOGETHER OF THE TRINITY ITSELF. ONE ESSENCE IN GOD, AND THREE, IN GREEK, HYPOSTASES, IN LATIN, PERSONS

9. Wherefore let us hold this above all, that whatsoever is said of that most eminent and divine loftiness in respect to itself, is said in respect to substance, but that which is said in relation to anything, is not said in respect to substance, but relatively; and that the effect of the same substance in Father and Son and Holy Spirit is, that whatsoever is said of each in respect to themselves, is to be taken of them, not in the plural in sum, but in the singular. For as the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, which no one doubts to be said in respect to substance, yet we do not say that the very Supreme Trinity itself is three Gods, but one God. So the Father is great, the Son great, and the Holy Spirit great; yet not three greats, but one great. For it is not written of the Father alone, as they perversely suppose, but of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, "Thou art great: Thou art God alone." And the Father is good, the Son good, and the Holy Spirit good; yet not three goods, but one good, of whom it is said, "None is good, save one, that is, God." For the Lord Jesus, lest He should be understood as man only by him who said, "Good Master," as addressing a man, does not therefore say, There is none good, save the Father alone; but, "None is good, save one, that is, God." For the Father by Himself is declared by the name of Father; but by the name of God, both Himself and the Son and the Holy Spirit, because the Trinity is one God. But position, and condition, and places, and times, are not said to be in God properly, but metaphorically and through similitudes. For He is both said to dwell between the cherubims, which is spoken in respect to position; and to be covered with the deep as with a garment, which is said in respect to condition; and "Thy years shall have no end," which is said in respect of time; and, "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there," which is said in respect to place. And as respects action (or making), perhaps it may be said most truly of God alone, for God alone makes and Himself is not made. Nor is He liable to passions as far as belongs to that substance whereby He is God. So the Father is omnipotent, the Son omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit is omnipotent; yet not three omnipotents, but one omnipotent: "For of Him are all things, and through Him are all things, and in Him are all things; to whom be glory." Whatever, therefore, is spoken of God in respect to Himself, is both spoken singly of each person, that is, of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and together of the Trinity itself, not plurally but in the singular. For inasmuch as to God it is not one thing to be, and another

thing to be great, but to Him it is the same thing to be, as it is to be great; therefore, as we do not say three essences, so we do not say three greatnesses, but one essence and one greatness. I say essence, which in Greek is called ousia, and which we call more usually substance.

10. They indeed use also the word hypostasis; but they intend to put a difference, I know not what, between ousia and hypostasis: so that most of ourselves who treat these things in the Greek language, are accustomed to say, mian ousian, treis hupostaseis or in Latin, one essence, three substances.

## CHAPTER 9

### THE THREE PERSONS NOT PROPERLY SO CALLED [IN A HUMAN SENSE]

But because with us the usage has already obtained, that by essence we understand the same thing which is understood by substance; we do not dare to say one essence, three substances, but one essence or substance and three persons: as many writers in Latin, who treat of these things, and are of authority, have said, in that they could not find any other more suitable way by which to enunciate in words that which they understood without words. For, in truth, as the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, and that Holy Spirit who is also called the gift of God is neither the Father nor the Son, certainly they are three. And so it is said plurally, "I and my Father are one." For He has not said, "is one," as the Sabellians say; but, "are one." Yet, when the question is asked, What three? human language labors altogether under great poverty of speech. The answer, however, is given, three "persons," not that it might be [completely] spoken, but that it might not be left [wholly] unspoken.

## CHAPTER 10

### THOSE THINGS WHICH BELONG ABSOLUTELY TO GOD AS AN ESSENCE, ARE SPOKEN OF THE TRINITY IN THE SINGULAR, NOT IN THE PLURAL

11. As, therefore, we do not say three essences, so we do not say three greatnesses, or three who are great. For in things which are great by partaking of greatness, to which it is one thing to be, and another to be

great, as a great house, and a great mountain, and a great mind; in these things, I say, greatness is one thing, and that which is great because of greatness is another, and a great house, certainly, is not absolute greatness itself. But that is absolute greatness by which not only a great house is great, and any great mountain is great, but also by which every other thing whatsoever is great, which is called great; so that greatness itself is one thing, and those things are another which are called great from it. And this greatness certainly is primarily great, and in a much more excellent way than those things which are great by partaking of it. But since God is not great with that greatness which is not Himself, so that God, in being great, is, as it were, partaker of that greatness;—otherwise that will be a greatness greater than God, whereas there is nothing greater than God; therefore, He is great with that greatness by which He Himself is that same greatness. And, therefore, as we do not say three essences, so neither do we say three greatnesses; for it is the same thing to God to be, and to be great. For the same reason neither do we say three greats, but one who is great; since God is not great by partaking of greatness, but He is great by Himself being great, because He Himself is His own greatness. Let the same be said also of the goodness, and of the eternity, and of the omnipotence of God, and, in short, of all the predicaments which can be predicated of God, as He is spoken of in respect to Himself, not metaphorically and by similitude, but properly, if indeed anything can be spoken of Him properly, by the mouth of man.

## CHAPTER 11

### WHAT IS SAID RELATIVELY IN THE TRINITY

12. But whereas, in the same Trinity, some things severally are specially predicated, these are in no way said in reference to themselves in themselves, but either in mutual reference, or in respect to the creature; and, therefore, it is manifest that such things are spoken relatively, not in the way of substance. For the Trinity is called one God, great, good, eternal, omnipotent; and the same God Himself may be called His own deity, His own magnitude, His own goodness, His own eternity, His own omnipotence: but the Trinity cannot in the same way be called the Father, except perhaps metaphorically, in respect to the creature, on account of the

adoption of sons. For that which is written, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord,” ought certainly not to be understood as if the Son were excepted, or the Holy Spirit were excepted; which one Lord our God we rightly call also our Father, as regenerating us by His grace. Neither can the Trinity in any wise be called the Son, but it can be called, in its entirety, the Holy Spirit, according to that which is written, “God is a Spirit;” because both the Father is a spirit and the Son is a spirit, and the Father is holy and the Son is holy. Therefore, since the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God, and certainly God is holy, and God is a spirit, the Trinity can be called also the Holy Spirit. But yet that Holy Spirit, who is not the Trinity, but is understood as in the Trinity, is spoken of in His proper name of the Holy Spirit relatively, since He is referred both to the Father and to the Son, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. But the relation is not itself apparent in that name, but it is apparent when He is called the gift of God; for He is the gift of the Father and of the Son, because “He proceeds from the Father,” as the Lord says; and because that which the apostle says, “Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His,” he says certainly of the Holy Spirit Himself. When we say, therefore, the gift of the giver, and the giver of the gift, we speak in both cases relatively in reciprocal reference. Therefore the Holy Spirit is a certain unutterable communion of the Father and the Son; and on that account, perhaps, He is so called, because the same name is suitable to both the Father and the Son. For He Himself is called specially that which they are called in common; because both the Father is a spirit and the Son a spirit, both the Father is holy and the Son holy. In order, therefore, that the communion of both may be signified from a name which is suitable to both, the Holy Spirit is called the gift of both. And this Trinity is one God, alone, good, great, eternal, omnipotent; itself its own unity, deity, greatness, goodness, eternity, omnipotence.

## CHAPTER 12

IN RELATIVE THINGS THAT ARE RECIPROCAL, NAMES ARE SOMETIMES WANTING

13. Neither ought it to influence us—since we have said that the Holy Spirit is so called relatively, not the Trinity itself, but He who is in the Trinity—that the designation of Him to whom He is referred, does not seem to

answer in turn to His designation. For we cannot, as we say the servant of a master, and the master of a servant, the son of a father and the father of a son, so also say here—because these things are said relatively. For we speak of the Holy Spirit of the Father; but, on the other hand, we do not speak of the Father of the Holy Spirit, lest the Holy Spirit should be understood to be His Son. So also we speak of the Holy Spirit of the Son; but we do not speak of the Son of the Holy Spirit, lest the Holy Spirit be understood to be His Father. For it is the case in many relatives, that no designation is to be found by which those things which bear relation to each other may [in name] mutually correspond to each other. For what is more clearly spoken relatively than the word earnest? Since it is referred to that of which it is an earnest, and an earnest is always an earnest of something. Can we then, as we say, the earnest of the Father and of the Son, say in turn, the Father of the earnest or the Son of the earnest? But, on the other hand, when we say the gift of the Father and of the Son, we cannot indeed say the Father of the gift, or the Son of the gift; but that these may correspond mutually to each other, we say the gift of the giver and the giver of the gift; because here a word in use may be found, there it cannot.

## CHAPTER 13

### HOW THE WORD BEGINNING (PRINCIPIUM) IS SPOKEN RELATIVELY IN THE TRINITY

14. The Father is called so, therefore, relatively, and He is also relatively said to be the Beginning, and whatever else there may be of the kind; but He is called the Father in relation to the Son, the Beginning in relation to all things, which are from Him. So the Son is relatively so called; He is called also relatively the Word and the Image. And in all these appellations He is referred to the Father, but the Father is called by none of them. And the Son is also called the Beginning; for when it was said to Him, “Who art Thou?” He replied, “Even the Beginning, who also speak to you.” But is He, pray, the Beginning of the Father? For He intended to show Himself to be the Creator when He said that He was the Beginning, as the Father also is the beginning of the creature in that all things are from Him. For creator, too, is spoken relatively to creature, as master to servant. And so when we say, both that the Father is the Beginning, and that the Son is the Beginning, we do not speak of two beginnings of the creature; since both the Father and

the Son together is one beginning in respect to the creature, as one Creator, as one God. But if whatever remains within itself and produces or works anything is a beginning to that thing which it produces or works; then we cannot deny that the Holy Spirit also is rightly called the Beginning, since we do not separate Him from the appellation of Creator: and it is written of Him that He works; and assuredly, in working, He remains within Himself; for He Himself is not changed and turned into any of the things which He works. And see what it is that He works: “But the manifestation of the Spirit,” he says, “is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will;” certainly as God—for who can work such great things but God?—but “it is the same God which worketh all in all.” For if we are asked point by point concerning the Holy Spirit, we answer most truly that He is God; and with the Father and the Son together He is one God. Therefore, God is spoken of as one Beginning in respect to the creature, not as two or three beginnings.

#### CHAPTER 14

##### THE FATHER AND THE SON THE ONLY BEGINNING (PRINCIPIUM) OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

15. But in their mutual relation to one another in the Trinity itself, if the begetter is a beginning in relation to that which he begets, the Father is a beginning in relation to the Son, because He begets Him; but whether the Father is also a beginning in relation to the Holy Spirit, since it is said, “He proceeds from the Father,” is no small question. Because, if it is so, He will not only be a beginning to that thing which He begets or makes, but also to that which He gives. And here, too, that question comes to light, as it can, which is wont to trouble many, Why the Holy Spirit is not also a son, since He, too, comes forth from the Father, as it is read in the Gospel. For the Spirit came forth, not as born, but as given; and so He is not called a son, because He was neither born, as the Only-begotten, nor made, so that by the grace of God He might be born into adoption, as we are. For that which is



born of the Father, is referred to the Father only when called Son, and so the Son is the Son of the Father, and not also our Son; but that which is given is referred both to Him who gave, and to those to whom He gave; and so the Holy Spirit is not only the Spirit of the Father and of the Son who gave Him, but He is also called ours, who have received Him: as “The salvation of the Lord,” who gives salvation, is said also to be our salvation, who have received it. Therefore, the Spirit is both the Spirit of God who gave Him, and ours who have received Him. Not, indeed, that spirit of ours by which we are, because that is the spirit of a man which is in him; but this Spirit is ours in another mode, viz. that in which we also say, “Give us this day our bread.” Although certainly we have received that spirit also, which is called the spirit of a man. “For what hast thou,” he says, “which thou didst not receive?” But that is one thing, which we have received that we might be; another, that which we have received that we might be holy. Whence it is also written of John, that he “came in the spirit and power of Elias;” and by the spirit of Elias is meant the Holy Spirit, whom Elias received. And the same thing is to be understood of Moses, when the Lord says to him, “And I will take of thy spirit, and will put it upon them;” that is, I will give to them of the Holy Spirit, which I have already given to thee. If, therefore, that also which is given has him for a beginning by whom it is given, since it has received from no other source that which proceeds from him; it must be admitted that the Father and the Son are a Beginning of the Holy Spirit, not two Beginnings; but as the Father and Son are one God, and one Creator, and one Lord relatively to the creature, so are they one Beginning relatively to the Holy Spirit. But the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one Beginning in respect to the creature, as also one Creator and one God.

## CHAPTER 15

### WHETHER THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS A GIFT BEFORE AS WELL AS AFTER HE WAS GIVEN

16. But it is asked further, whether, as the Son, by being born, has not only this, that He is the Son, but that He is absolutely; and so also the Holy Spirit, by being given, has not only this, that He is given, but that He is absolutely—whether therefore He was, before He was given, but was not yet a gift; or whether, for the very reason that God was about to give Him, He was already a gift also before He was given. But if He does not proceed

unless when He is given, and assuredly could not proceed before there was one to whom He might be given; how, in that case, was He [absolutely] in His very substance, if He is not unless because He is given? just as the Son, by being born, not only has this, that He is a Son, which is said relatively, but His very substance absolutely, so that He is. Does the Holy Spirit proceed always, and proceed not in time, but from eternity, but because He so proceeded that He was capable of being given, was already a gift even before there was one to whom He might be given? For there is a difference in meaning between a gift and a thing that has been given. For a gift may exist even before it is given; but it cannot be called a thing that has been given unless it has been given.

## CHAPTER 16

### WHAT IS SAID OF GOD IN TIME, IS SAID RELATIVELY, NOT ACCIDENTALLY

17. Nor let it trouble us that the Holy Spirit, although He is co-eternal with the Father and the Son, yet is called something which exists in time; as, for instance, this very thing which we have called Him, a thing that has been given. For the Spirit is a gift eternally, but a thing that has been given in time. For if a lord also is not so called unless when he begins to have a slave, that appellation likewise is relative and in time to God; for the creature is not from all eternity, of which He is the Lord. How then shall we make it good that relative terms themselves are not accidental, since nothing happens accidentally to God in time, because He is incapable of change, as we have argued in the beginning of this discussion? Behold! to be the Lord, is not eternal to God; otherwise we should be compelled to say that the creature also is from eternity, since He would not be a lord from all eternity unless the creature also was a servant from all eternity. But as he cannot be a slave who has not a lord, neither can he be a lord who has not a slave. And if there be any one who says that God, indeed, is alone eternal, and that times are not eternal on account of their variety and changeableness, but that times nevertheless did not begin to be in time (for there was no time before times began, and therefore it did not happen to God in time that He should be Lord, since He was Lord of the very times themselves, which assuredly did not begin in time): what will he reply respecting man, who was made in time, and of whom assuredly He was not

the Lord before he was of whom He was to be Lord? Certainly to be the Lord of man happened to God in time. And that all dispute may seem to be taken away, certainly to be your Lord, or mine, who have only lately begun to be, happened to God in time. Or if this, too, seems uncertain on account of the obscure question respecting the soul, what is to be said of His being the Lord of the people of Israel? since, although the nature of the soul already existed, which that people had (a matter into which we do not now inquire), yet that people existed not as yet, and the time is apparent when it began to exist. Lastly, that He should be Lord of this or that tree, or of this or that corn crop, which only lately began to be, happened in time; since, although the matter itself already existed, yet it is one thing to be Lord of the matter (*materiae*), another to be Lord of the already created nature (*naturae*). For man, too, is lord of the wood at one time, and at another he is lord of the chest, although fabricated of that same wood; which he certainly was not at the time when he was already the lord of the wood. How then shall we make it good that nothing is said of God according to accident, except because nothing happens to His nature by which He may be changed, so that those things are relative accidents which happen in connection with some change of the things of which they are spoken. As a friend is so called relatively: for he does not begin to be one, unless when he has begun to love; therefore some change of will takes place, in order that he may be called a friend. And money, when it is called a price, is spoken of relatively, and yet it was not changed when it began to be a price; nor, again, when it is called a pledge, or any other thing of the kind. If, therefore, money can so often be spoken of relatively with no change of itself, so that neither when it begins, nor when it ceases to be so spoken of, does any change take place in that nature or form of it, whereby it is money; how much more easily ought we to admit, concerning that unchangeable substance of God, that something may be so predicated relatively in respect to the creature, that although it begin to be so predicated in time, yet nothing shall be understood to have happened to the substance itself of God, but only to that creature in respect to which it is predicated? "Lord," it is said, "Thou hast been made our refuge." God, therefore, is said to be our refuge relatively, for He is referred to us, and He then becomes our refuge when we flee to Him; pray does anything come to pass then in His nature, which, before we fled to Him, was not? In us therefore some change does

take place; for we were worse before we fled to Him, and we become better by fleeing to Him: but in Him there is no change. So also He begins to be our Father, when we are regenerated through His grace, since He gave us power to become the sons of God. Our substance therefore is changed for the better, when we become His sons; and He at the same time begins to be our Father, but without any change of His own substance. Therefore that which begins to be spoken of God in time, and which was not spoken of Him before, is manifestly spoken of Him relatively; yet not according to any accident of God, so that anything should have happened to Him, but clearly according to some accident of that, in respect to which God begins to be called something relatively. When a righteous man begins to be a friend of God, he himself is changed; but far be it from us to say, that God loves any one in time with as it were a new love, which was not in Him before, with whom things gone by have not passed away and things future have been already done. Therefore He loved all His saints before the foundation of the world, as He predestinated them; but when they are converted and find them; then they are said to begin to be loved by Him, that what is said may be said in that way in which it can be comprehended by human affections. So also, when He is said to be wroth with the unrighteous, and gentle with the good, they are changed, not He: just as the light is troublesome to weak eyes, pleasant to those that are strong; namely, by their change, not its own.

# Book VI

The question is proposed, how the apostle calls Christ “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” And an argument is raised, whether the Father is not wisdom Himself, but only the Father of wisdom; or whether Wisdom begat Wisdom. But the answer to this is deferred for a little, while the unity and equality of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, are proved; and that we ought to believe in a Trinity, not in a threefold (triplicem) god. Lastly, that saying of Hilary is explained, eternity in the Father, appearance in the image, use in the gift.

## CHAPTER 1

THE SON, ACCORDING TO THE APOSTLE, IS THE POWER AND WISDOM OF THE FATHER. HENCE THE REASONING OF THE CATHOLICS AGAINST THE EARLIER ARIANS. A DIFFICULTY IS RAISED, WHETHER THE FATHER IS NOT WISDOM HIMSELF, BUT ONLY THE FATHER OF WISDOM

1. Some think themselves hindered from admitting the equality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, because it is written, “Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God;” in that, on this ground, there does not appear to be equality; because the Father is not Himself power and wisdom, but the begetter of power and wisdom. And, in truth, the question is usually asked with no common earnestness, in what way God can be called the Father of power and wisdom. For the apostle says, “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” And hence some on our side have reasoned in this way against the Arians, at least against those who at first set themselves up against the Catholic faith. For Arius himself is reported to have said, that if He is a Son, then He was born; if He was born, there was a time when the Son was not: not understanding that even to be born is, to God, from all eternity; so that the Son is co-eternal with the Father, as the brightness which is produced and is spread around by fire is co-eval with it, and would be co-eternal, if fire were eternal. And therefore some of the later Arians

have abandoned that opinion, and have confessed that the Son of God did not begin to be in time. But among the arguments which those on our side used to hold against them who said that there was a time when the Son was not, some were wont to introduce such an argument as this: If the Son of God is the power and wisdom of God, and God was never without power and wisdom, then the Son is co-eternal with God the Father; but the apostle says, "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God;" and a man must be senseless to say that God at any time had not power or wisdom; therefore there was no time when the Son was not.

2. Now this argument compels us to say that God the Father is not wise, except by having the wisdom which He begat, not by the Father in Himself being wisdom itself. Further, if it be so, just as the Son also Himself is called God of God, Light of Light, we must consider whether He can be called wisdom of wisdom, if God the Father is not wisdom itself, but only the begetter of wisdom. And if we hold this, why is He not the begetter also of His own greatness, and of His own goodness, and of His own eternity, and of His own omnipotence; so that He is not Himself His own greatness, and His own goodness, and His own eternity, and His own omnipotence; but is great with that greatness which He begat, and good with that goodness, and eternal with that eternity, and omnipotent with that omnipotence, which was born of Him; just as He Himself is not His own wisdom, but is wise with that wisdom which was born of Him? For we need not be afraid of being compelled to say that there are many sons of God, over and above the adoption of the creature, co-eternal with the Father, if He be the begetter of His own greatness, and goodness, and eternity, and omnipotence. Because it is easy to reply to this cavil, that it does not at all follow, because many things are named, that He should be the Father of many co-eternal sons; just as it does not follow that He is the Father of two sons, because Christ is said to be the power of God, and the wisdom of God. For that certainly is the power which is the wisdom, and that is the wisdom which is the power; and in like manner, therefore, of the rest also; so that that is the greatness which is the power, or any other of those things which either have been mentioned above, or may hereafter be mentioned.

## CHAPTER 2

### WHAT IS SAID OF THE FATHER AND SON TOGETHER, AND WHAT NOT

3. But if nothing is spoken of the Father as such, except that which is spoken of Him in relation to the Son, that is, that He is His father, or begetter, or beginning; and if also the begetter is by consequence a beginning to that which he begets of himself; but whatever else is spoken of Him is so spoken as with the Son, or rather in the Son; whether that He is great with that greatness which He begat, or just with that justice which He begat, or good with that goodness which He begat, or powerful with that force or power which He begat, or wise with that wisdom which He begat: yet the Father is not said to be greatness itself, but the begetter of greatness; but the Son, as He is called the Son as such, is not so called with the Father but in relation to the Father, so is not great in and by himself, but with the Father, of whom He is the greatness; and so also is called wise with the Father, of whom He Himself is the wisdom; just as the Father is called wise with the Son, because He is wise with that wisdom which He begat; therefore the one is not called without the other, whatever they are called in respect to themselves; that is, whatever they are called that manifests their essential nature, both are so called together;—if these things are so, then the Father is not God without the Son, nor the Son God without the Father, but both together are God. And that which is said, “In the beginning was the Word,” means that the Word was in the Father. Or if “In the beginning” is intended to mean, Before all things; then in that which follows, “And the Word was with God,” the Son alone is understood to be the Word, not the Father and Son together, as though both were one Word (for He is the Word in the same way as He is the Image, but the Father and Son are not both together the Image, but the Son alone is the Image of the Father: just as He is also the Son of the Father, for both together are not the Son). But in that which is added, “And the Word was with God,” there is much reason to understand thus: “The Word,” which is the Son alone, “was with God,” which is not the Father alone, but God the Father and the Son together. But what wonder is there, if this can be said in the case of some twofold things widely different from each other? For what are so different as soul and body? Yet we can say the soul was with a man, that is, in a man; although the soul is not the body, and man is both soul and body together. So that

what follows in the Scripture, “And the Word was God,” may be understood thus: The Word, which is not the Father, was God together with the Father. Are we then to say thus, that the Father is the begetter of His own greatness, that is, the begetter of His own power, or the begetter of His own wisdom; and that the Son is greatness, and power, and wisdom; but that the great, omnipotent, and wise God, is both together? How then God of God, Light of Light? For not both together are God of God, but only the Son is of God, that is to say, of the Father; nor are both together Light of Light, but the Son only is of Light, that is, of the Father. Unless, perhaps, it was in order to intimate and inculcate briefly that the Son is co-eternal with the Father, that it is said, God of God, and Light of Light, or anything else of the like kind: as if to say, This which is not the Son without the Father, of this which is not the Father without the Son; that is, this Light which is not Light without the Father, of that Light, viz. the Father, which is not Light without the Son; so that, when it is said, God which is not the Son without the Father, and of God which is not the Father without the Son, it may be perfectly understood that the Begetter did not precede that which He begot. And if this be so, then this alone cannot be said of them, namely, this or that of this or that, which they are not both together. Just as the Word cannot be said to be of the Word, because both are not the Word together, but only the Son; nor image of image, since they are not both together the image; nor Son of Son, since both together are not the Son, according to that which is said, “I and my Father are one.” For “we are one” means, what He is, that am I also; according to essence, not according to relation.

### CHAPTER 3

THAT THE UNITY OF THE ESSENCE OF THE FATHER AND THE SON IS TO BE GATHERED FROM THE WORDS, “WE ARE ONE.” THE SON IS EQUAL TO THE FATHER BOTH IN WISDOM AND IN ALL OTHER THINGS

4. And I know not whether the words, “They are one,” are ever found in Scripture as spoken of things of which the nature is different. But if there are more things than one of the same nature, and they differ in sentiment, they are not one, and that so far as they differ in sentiment. For if the disciples were already one by the fact of being men, He would not say, “That they may be one, as we are one,” when commending them to the



Father. But because Paul and Apollos were both alike men, and also of like sentiments, “He that planteth,” he says, “and he that watereth are one.” When, therefore, anything is so called one, that it is not added in what it is one, and yet more things than one are called one, then the same essence and nature is signified, not differing nor disagreeing. But when it is added in what it is one, it may be meant that something is made one out of things more than one, though they are different in nature. As soul and body are assuredly not one; for, what are so different? unless there be added, or understood in what they are one, that is, one man, or one animal [person]. Thence the apostle says, “He who is joined to a harlot, is one body;” he does not say, they are one or he is one; but he has added “body,” as though it were one body composed by being joined together of two different bodies, masculine and feminine. And, “He that is joined unto the Lord,” he says,” is one spirit:” he did not say, he that is joined unto the Lord is one, or they are one; but he added, “spirit.” For the spirit of man and the Spirit of God are different in nature; but by being joined they become one spirit of two different spirits, so that the Spirit of God is blessed and perfect without the human spirit, but the spirit of man cannot be blessed without God. Nor is it without cause, I think, that when the Lord said so much in the Gospel according to John, and so often, of unity itself, whether of His own with the Father, or of ours interchangeably with ourselves; He has nowhere said, that we are also one with Himself, but, “that they maybe one as we also are one.” Therefore the Father and the Son are one, undoubtedly according to unity of substance; and there is one God, and one great, and one wise, as we have argued.

5. Whence then is the Father greater? For if greater, He is greater by greatness; but whereas the Son is His greatness, neither assuredly is the Son greater than He who begat Him, nor is the Father greater than that greatness, whereby He is great; therefore they are equal. For whence is He equal, if not in that which He is, to whom it is not one thing to be, and another to be great? Or if the Father is greater in eternity, the Son is not equal in anything whatsoever. For whence equal? If you say in greatness, that greatness is not equal which is less eternal, and so of all things else. Or is He perhaps equal in power, but not equal in wisdom? But how is that power which is less wise, equal? Or is He equal in wisdom, but not equal in

power? But how is that wisdom equal which is less powerful? It remains, therefore, that if He is not equal in anything, He is not equal in all. But Scripture proclaims, that “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Therefore any adversary of the truth whatever, provided he feels bound by apostolical authority, must needs confess that the Son is equal with God in each one thing whatsoever. Let him choose that which he will; from it he will be shown, that He is equal in all things which are said of His substance.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### THE SAME ARGUMENT CONTINUED

6. For in like manner the virtues which are in the human mind, although each has its own several and different meaning, yet are in no way mutually separable; so that, for instance, whosoever were equal in courage, are equal also in prudence, and temperance, and justice. For if you say that such and such men are equal in courage, but that one of them is greater in prudence, it follows that the courage of the other is less prudent, and so neither are they equal in courage, since the courage of the former is more prudent. And so you will find it to be the case with the other virtues, if you consider them one by one. For the question is not of the strength of the body, but of the courage of the mind. How much more therefore is this the case in that unchangeable and eternal substance, which is incomparably more simple than the human mind is? Since, in the human mind, to be is not the same as to be strong, or prudent, or just, or temperate; for a mind can exist, and yet have none of these virtues. But in God to be is the same as to be strong, or to be just, or to be wise, or whatever is said of that simple multiplicity, or multifold simplicity, whereby to signify His substance. Wherefore, whether we say God of God in such way that this name belongs to each, yet not so that both together are two Gods, but one God; for they are in such way united with each other, as according to the apostle’s testimony may take place even in diverse and differing substances; for both the Lord alone is a Spirit, and the spirit of a man alone is assuredly a spirit; yet, if it cleave to the Lord, “it is one spirit:” how much more there, where there is an absolutely inseparable and eternal union, so that He may not seem absurdly to be called as it were the Son of both, when He is called the Son of God, if that which is called God is only said of both together. Or perhaps it is, that

whatever is said of God so as to indicate His substance, is not said except of both together, nay of the Trinity itself together? Whether therefore it be this or that (which needs a closer inquiry), it is enough for the present to see from what has been said, that the Son is in no respect equal with the Father, if He is found to be unequal in anything which has to do with signifying His substance, as we have already shown. But the apostle has said that He is equal. Therefore the Son is equal with the Father in all things, and is of one and the same substance.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE HOLY SPIRIT ALSO IS EQUAL TO THE FATHER AND THE SON IN ALL THINGS

7. Wherefore also the Holy Spirit consists in the same unity of substance, and in the same equality. For whether He is the unity of both, or the holiness, or the love, or therefore the unity because the love, and therefore the love because the holiness, it is manifest that He is not one of the two, through whom the two are joined, through whom the Begotten is loved by the Begetter, and loves Him that begat Him, and through whom, not by participation, but by their own essence, neither by the gift of any superior, but by their own, they are “keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;” which we are commanded to imitate by grace, both towards God and towards ourselves. “On which two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” So those three are God, one, alone, great, wise, holy, blessed. But we are blessed from Him, and through Him, and in Him; because we ourselves are one by His gift, and one spirit with Him, because our soul cleaves to Him so as to follow Him. And it is good for us to cleave to God, since He will destroy every man who is estranged from Him. Therefore the Holy Spirit, whatever it is, is something common both to the Father and Son. But that communion itself is consubstantial and co-eternal; and if it may fitly be called friendship, let it be so called; but it is more aptly called love. And this is also a substance, since God is a substance, and “God is love,” as it is written. But as He is a substance together with the Father and the Son, so that substance is together with them great, and together with them good, and together with them holy, and whatsoever else is said in reference to substance; since it is not one thing to God to be, and another to be great or to be good, and the rest, as we have shown above. For if love is

less great therein [i.e. in God] than wisdom, then wisdom is loved in less degree than according to what it is; love is therefore equal, in order that wisdom may be loved according to its being; but wisdom is equal with the Father, as we have proved above; therefore also the Holy Spirit is equal; and if equal, equal in all things, on account of the absolute simplicity which is in that substance. And therefore they are not more than three: One who loves Him who is from Himself, and One who loves Him from whom He is, and Love itself. And if this last is nothing, how is “God love”? If it is not substance, how is God substance?

## CHAPTER 6

### HOW GOD IS A SUBSTANCE BOTH SIMPLE AND MANIFOLD

8. But if it is asked how that substance is both simple and manifold: consider, first, why the creature is manifold, but in no way really simple. And first, all that is body is composed certainly of parts; so that therein one part is greater, another less, and the whole is greater than any part whatever or how great soever. For the heaven and the earth are parts of the whole bulk of the world; and the earth alone, and the heaven alone, is composed of innumerable parts; and its third part is less than the remainder, and the half of it is less than the whole; and the whole body of the world, which is usually called by its two parts, viz. the heaven and the earth, is certainly greater than the heaven alone or the earth alone. And in each several body, size is one thing, color another, shape another; for the same color and the same shape may remain with diminished size; and the same shape and the same size may remain with the color changed; and the same shape not remaining, yet the thing may be just as great, and of the same color. And whatever other things are predicated together of body can be changed either all together, or the larger part of them without the rest. And hence the nature of body is conclusively proved to be manifold, and in no respect simple. The spiritual creature also, that is, the soul, is indeed the more simple of the two if compared with the body; but if we omit the comparison with the body, it is manifold, and itself also not simple. For it is on this account more simple than the body, because it is not diffused in bulk through extension of place, but in each body, it is both whole in the whole, and whole in each several part of it; and, therefore, when anything takes place in any small

particle whatever of the body, such as the soul can feel, although it does not take place in the whole body, yet the whole soul feels it, since the whole soul is not unconscious of it. But, nevertheless, since in the soul also it is one thing to be skillful, another to be indolent, another to be intelligent, another to be of retentive memory; since cupidity is one thing, fear another, joy another, sadness another; and since things innumerable, and in innumerable ways, are to be found in the nature of the soul, some without others, and some more, some less; it is manifest that its nature is not simple, but manifold. For nothing simple is changeable, but every creature is changeable.

## CHAPTER 7

### GOD IS A TRINITY, BUT NOT TRIPLE (TRIPLEX)

But God is truly called in manifold ways, great, good, wise, blessed, true, and whatsoever other thing seems to be said of Him not unworthily: but His greatness is the same as His wisdom; for He is not great by bulk, but by power; and His goodness is the same as His wisdom and greatness, and His truth the same as all those things; and in Him it is not one thing to be blessed, and another to be great, or wise, or true, or good, or in a word to be Himself.

9. Neither, since He is a Trinity, is He therefore to be thought triple (triplex) otherwise the Father alone, or the Son alone, will be less than the Father and Son together. Although, indeed, it is hard to see how we can say, either the Father alone, or the Son alone; since both the Father is with the Son, and the Son with the Father, always and inseparably: not that both are the Father, or both are the Son; but because they are always one in relation to the other, and neither the one nor the other alone. But because we call even the Trinity itself God alone, although He is always with holy spirits and souls, but say that He only is God, because they are not also God with Him; so we call the Father the Father alone, not because He is separate from the Son, but because they are not both together the Father.

## CHAPTER 8

### NO ADDITION CAN BE MADE TO THE NATURE OF GOD

Since, therefore, the Father alone, or the Son alone, or the Holy Spirit alone, is as great as is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit together, in no manner is He to be called threefold. Forasmuch as bodies increase by union of themselves. For although he who cleaves to his wife is one body; yet it is a greater body than if it were that of the husband alone, or of the wife alone. But in spiritual things, when the less adheres to the greater, as the creature to the Creator, the former becomes greater than it was, not the latter. For in those things which are not great by bulk, to be greater is to be better. And the spirit of any creature becomes better, when it cleaves to the Creator, than if it did not so cleave; and therefore also greater because better. "He," then, "that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit:" but yet the Lord does not therefore become greater, although he who is joined to the Lord does so. In God Himself, therefore when the equal Son, or the Holy Spirit equal to the Father and the Son, is joined to the equal Father, God does not become greater than each of them severally; because that perfectness cannot increase. But whether it be the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, He is perfect, and God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit is perfect; and therefore He is a Trinity rather than triple.

## CHAPTER 9

### WHETHER ONE OR THE THREE PERSONS TOGETHER ARE CALLED THE ONLY GOD

10. And since we are showing how we can say the Father alone, because there is no Father in the Godhead except Himself, we must consider also the opinion which holds that the only true God is not the Father alone, but the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For if any one should ask whether the Father alone is God, how can it be replied that He is not, unless perhaps we were to say that the Father indeed is God, but that He is not God alone, but that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are God alone? But then what shall we do with that testimony of the Lord? For He was speaking to the Father, and had named the Father as Him to whom He was speaking, when He says, "And this is life eternal, that they may know Thee the one true God." And this the Arians indeed usually take, as if the Son were not true God. Passing them by, however, we must see whether, when it is said to the Father, "That they may know Thee the one true God," we are forced to understand it as if He wished to intimate that the Father alone is the true

God; lest we should not understand any to be God, except the three together, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Are we therefore, from the testimony of the Lord, both to call the Father the one true God, and the Son the one true God, and the Holy Spirit the one true God, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit together, that is, the Trinity itself together, not three true Gods but one true God? Or because He added, "And Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent," are we to supply "the one true God;" so that the order of the words is this, "That they may know Thee, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, the one true God?" Why then did He omit to mention the Holy Spirit? Is it because it follows, that whenever we name One who cleaves to One by a harmony so great that through this harmony both are one, this harmony itself must be understood, although it is not mentioned? For in that place, too, the apostle seems as it were to pass over the Holy Spirit; and yet there, too, He is understood, where he says, "All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." And again, "The head of the woman is the man, the head of the man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God." But again, if God is only all three together, how can God be the head of Christ, that is, the Trinity the head of Christ, since Christ is in the Trinity in order that it may be the Trinity? Is that which is the Father with the Son, the head of that which is the Son alone? For the Father with the Son is God, but the Son alone is Christ: especially since it is the Word already made flesh that speaks; and according to this His humiliation also, the Father is greater than He, as He says, "for my Father is greater than I;" so that the very being of God, which is one to Him with the Father, is itself the head of the man who is mediator, which He is alone. For if we rightly call the mind the chief thing of man, that is, as it were the head of the human substance, although the man himself together with the mind is man; why is not the Word with the Father, which together is God, much more suitably and much more the head of Christ, although Christ as man cannot be understood except with the Word which was made flesh? But this, as we have already said, we shall consider somewhat more carefully hereafter. At present the equality and one and the same substance of the Trinity has been demonstrated as briefly as possible, that in whatever way that other question be determined, the more rigorous discussion of which we have deferred, nothing may hinder us from confessing the absolute equality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

## CHAPTER 10

OF THE ATTRIBUTES ASSIGNED BY HILARY TO EACH PERSON. THE TRINITY IS REPRESENTED IN THINGS THAT ARE MADE

11. A certain writer, when he would briefly intimate the special attributes of each of the persons in the Trinity, tells us that “Eternity is in the Father, form in the Image, use in the Gift.” And since he was a man of no mean authority in handling the Scriptures, and in the assertion of the faith, for it is Hilary who put this in his book (On the Trinity, ii.); I have searched into the hidden meaning of these words as far as I can, that is, of the Father, and the Image, and the Gift, of eternity, and of form, and of use. And I do not think that he intended more by the word eternity, than that the Father has not a father from whom He is; but the Son is from the Father, so as to be, and so as to be co-eternal with Him. For if an image perfectly fills the measure of that of which it is the image, then the image is made equal to that of which it is the image, not the latter to its own image. And in respect to this image he has named form, I believe on account of the quality of beauty, where there is at once such great fitness, and prime equality, and prime likeness, differing in nothing, and unequal in no respect, and in no part unlike, but answering exactly to Him whose image it is: where there is prime and absolute life, to whom it is not one thing to live, and another to be, but the same thing to be and to live; and prime and absolute intellect, to whom it is not one thing to live, another to understand, but to understand is to live, and is to be, and all things are one: as though a perfect Word (John i. 1), to which nothing is wanting, and a certain skill of the omnipotent and wise God, full of all living, unchangeable sciences, and all one in it, as itself is one from one, with whom it is one. Therein God knew all things which He made by it; and therefore, while times pass away and succeed, nothing passes away or succeeds to the knowledge of God. For things which are created are not therefore known by God, because they have been made; and not rather have been therefore made, even although changeable, because they are known unchangeably by Him. Therefore that unspeakable conjunction of the Father and His image is not without fruition, without love, without joy. Therefore that love, delight, felicity, or blessedness, if indeed it can be worthily expressed by any human word, is called by him, in short, Use; and is the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, not begotten, but the



sweetness of the begetter and of the begotten, filling all creatures according to their capacity with abundant bountifulness and copiousness, that they may keep their proper order and rest satisfied in their proper place.

12. Therefore all these things which are made by divine skill, show in themselves a certain unity, and form, and order; for each of them is both some one thing, as are the several natures of bodies and dispositions of souls; and is fashioned in some form, as are the figures or qualities of bodies, and the various learning or skill of souls; and seeks or preserves a certain order, as are the several weights or combinations of bodies and the loves or delights of souls. When therefore we regard the Creator, who is understood by the things that are made we must needs understand the Trinity of whom there appear traces in the creature, as is fitting. For in that Trinity is the supreme source of all things, and the most perfect beauty, and the most blessed delight. Those three, therefore, both seem to be mutually determined to each other, and are in themselves infinite. But here in corporeal things, one thing alone is not as much as three together, and two are something more than one; but in that highest Trinity one is as much as the three together, nor are two anything more than one. And They are infinite in themselves. So both each are in each, and all in each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one. Let him who sees this, whether in part, or “through a glass and in an enigma,” rejoice in knowing God; and let him honor Him as God, and give thanks; but let him who does not see it, strive to see it through piety, not to cavil at it through blindness. Since God is one, but yet is a Trinity. Neither are we to take the words, “of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things,” as used indiscriminately [i.e., to denote a unity without distinctions]; nor yet to denote many gods, for “to Him, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

## Book VII

The question is explained, which had been deferred in the previous book, viz. that God the Father, who begat the Son, His power and wisdom, is not only the Father of power and wisdom, but also Himself power and wisdom; and similarly the Holy Spirit: yet that there are not three powers or three wisdoms, but one power and one wisdom, as there is one God and one essence. Inquiry is then made, why the Latins say one essence, three persons, in God; but the Greeks, one essence, three substances or hypostases: and both modes of expression are shown to arise from the necessities of speech, that we might have an answer to give when asked, what three, while truly confessing that there are three, viz. the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

### CHAPTER 1

AUGUSTIN RETURNS TO THE QUESTION, WHETHER EACH PERSON OF THE TRINITY BY ITSELF IS WISDOM. WITH WHAT DIFFICULTY, OR IN WHAT WAY, THE PROPOSED QUESTION IS TO BE SOLVED

1. Let us now inquire more carefully, so far as God grants, into that which a little before we deferred; whether each person also in the Trinity can also by Himself and not with the other two be called God, or great, or wise, or true, or omnipotent, or just, or anything else that can be said of God, not relatively, but absolutely; or whether these things cannot be said except when the Trinity is understood. For the question is raised,—because it is written, “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God,”—whether He is so the Father of His own wisdom and His own power, as that He is wise with that wisdom which He begat, and powerful with that power which He begat; and whether, since He is always powerful and wise, He always begat power and wisdom. For if it be so, then, as we have said, why is He not also the Father of His own greatness by which He is great, and of His own

goodness by which He is good, and of His own justice by which He is just, and whatever else there is? Or if all these things are understood, although under more names than one, to be in the same wisdom and power, so that that is greatness which is power, that is goodness which is wisdom, and that again is wisdom which is power, as we have already argued; then let us remember, that when I mention any one of these, I am to be taken as if I mentioned all. It is asked, then, whether the Father also by Himself is wise, and is Himself His own wisdom itself; or whether He is wise in the same way as He speaks. For He speaks by the Word which He begat, not by the word which is uttered, and sounds, and passes away, but by the Word which was with God, and the Word was God, and all things were made by Him: by the Word which is equal to Himself, by whom He always and unchangeably utters Himself. For He is not Himself the Word, as He is not the Son nor the image. But in speaking (putting aside those words of God in time which are produced in the creature, for they sound and pass away,—in speaking then) by that co-eternal Word, He is not understood singly, but with that Word itself, without whom certainly He does not speak. Is He then in such way wise as He is one who speaks, so as to be in such way wisdom, as He is the Word, and so that to be the Word is to be wisdom, that is, also to be power, so that power and wisdom and the Word may be the same, and be so called relatively as the Son and the image: and that the Father is not singly powerful or wise, but together with the power and wisdom itself which He begat (genuit); just as He is not singly one who speaks, but by that Word and together with that Word which He begat; and in like way great by that and together with that greatness, which He begat? And if He is not great by one thing, and God by another, but great by that whereby He is God, because it is not one thing to Him to be great and another to be God; it follows that neither is He God singly, but by that and together with that deity (deitas) which He begat; so that the Son is the deity of the Father, as He is the wisdom and power of the Father, and as He is the Word and image of the Father. And because it is not one thing to Him to be, another to be God, the Son is also the essence of the Father, as He is His Word and image. And hence also—except that He is the Father [the Unbegotten]—the Father is not anything unless because He has the Son; so that not only that which is meant by Father (which it is manifest He is not called relatively to Himself but to the Son, and therefore is the Father because He has the Son), but that

which He is in respect to His own substance is so called, because He begat His own essence. For as He is great, only with that greatness which He begat, so also He is, only with that essence which He begat; because it is not one thing to Him to be, and another to be great. Is He therefore the Father of His own essence, in the same way as He is the Father of His own greatness, as He is the Father of His own power and wisdom? since His greatness is the same as His power, and His essence the same as His greatness.

2. This discussion has arisen from that which is written, that “Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” Wherefore our discourse is compressed into these narrow limits, while we desire to speak things unspeakable; that either we must say that Christ is not the power of God and the wisdom of God, and so shamelessly and impiously resist the apostle; or we must acknowledge that Christ is indeed the power of God and the wisdom of God, but that His Father is not the Father of His own power and wisdom, which is not less impious; for so neither will He be the Father of Christ, because Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God; or that the Father is not powerful with His own power, or wise with His own wisdom: and who shall dare to say this? Or yet, again, that we must understand, that in the Father it is one thing to be, another thing to be wise, so that He is not by that by which He is wise: a thing usually understood of the soul, which is at some times unwise, at others wise; as being by nature changeable, and not absolutely and perfectly simple. Or, again, that the Father is not anything in respect to His own substance; and that not only that He is the Father, but that He is, is said relatively to the Son. How then can the Son be of the same essence as the Father, seeing that the Father, in respect to Himself, is neither His own essence, nor is at all in respect to Himself, but even His essence is in relation to the Son? But, on the contrary, much more is He of one and the same essence, since the Father and Son are one and the same essence; seeing that the Father has His being itself not in respect to Himself, but to the Son, which essence He begat, and by which essence He is whatever He is. Therefore neither [person] is in respect to Himself alone; and both exist relatively the one to the other. Or is the Father alone not called Father of himself, but whatever He is called, is called relatively to the Son, but the Son is predicated of in reference to

Himself? And if it be so, what is predicated of Him in reference to Himself? Is it His essence itself? But the Son is the essence of the Father, as He is the power and wisdom of the Father, as He is the Word of the Father, and the image of the Father. Or if the Son is called essence in reference to Himself, but the Father is not essence, but the begetter of the essence, and is not in respect to Himself, but is by that very essence which He begat; as He is great by that greatness which He begat: therefore the Son is also called greatness in respect to Himself; therefore He is also called, in like manner, power, and wisdom, and word, and image. But what can be more absurd than that He should be called image in respect to Himself? Or if image and word are not the very same with power and wisdom, but the former are spoken relatively, and the latter in respect to self, not to another; then we get to this, that the Father is not wise with that wisdom which He begat, because He Himself cannot be spoken relatively to it, and it cannot be spoken relatively to Him. For all things which are said relatively are said reciprocally; therefore it remains that even in essence the Son is spoken of relatively to the Father. But from this is educed a most unexpected sense: that essence itself is not essence, or at least that, when it is called essence, not essence but something relative is intimated. As when we speak of a master, essence is not intimated, but a relative which has reference to a slave; but when we speak of a man, or any such thing which is said in respect to self not to something else, then essence is intimated. Therefore when a man is called a master, man himself is essence, but he is called master relatively; for he is called man in respect to himself, but master in respect to his slave. But in regard to the point from which we started, if essence itself is spoken relatively, essence itself is not essence. Add further, that all essence which is spoken of relatively, is also something, although the relation be taken away; as e.g. in the case of a man who is a master, and a man who is a slave, and a horse that is a beast of burden, and money that is a pledge, the man, and the horse, and the money are spoken in respect to themselves, and are substances or essences; but master, and slave, and beast of burden, and pledge, are spoken relatively to something. But if there were not a man, that is, some substance, there would be none who could be called relatively a master; and if there were no horse having a certain essence, there would be nothing that could be called relatively a beast of burden; so if money were not some kind of substance, it could not be called relatively a

pledge. Wherefore, if the Father also is not something in respect to Himself then there is no one at all that can be spoken of relatively to something. For it is not as it is with color. The color of a thing is referred to the thing colored, and color is not spoken at all in reference to substance, but is always of something that is colored; but that thing of which it is the color, even if it is referred to color in respect to its being colored, is yet, in respect to its being a body, spoken of in respect to substance. But in no way may we think, in like manner, that the Father cannot be called anything in respect to His own substance, but that whatever He is called, He is called in relation to the Son; while the same Son is spoken of both in respect to His own substance and in relation to the Father, when He is called great greatness, and powerful power, plainly in respect to Himself, and the greatness and power of the great and powerful Father, by which the Father is great and powerful. It is not so; but both are substance, and both are one substance. And as it is absurd to say that whiteness is not white, so is it absurd to say that wisdom is not wise; and as whiteness is called white in respect to itself, so also wisdom is called wise in respect to itself. But the whiteness of a body is not an essence, since the body itself is the essence, and that is a quality of it; and hence also a body is said from that quality to be white, to which body to be is not the same thing as to be white. For the form in it is one thing, and the color another; and both are not in themselves, but in a certain bulk, which bulk is neither form nor color, but is formed and colored. True wisdom is both wise, and wise in itself. And since in the case of every soul that becomes wise by partaking of wisdom, if it again becomes foolish, yet wisdom in itself remains; nor when that soul was changed into folly is the wisdom likewise so changed; therefore wisdom is not in him who becomes wise by it, in the same manner as whiteness is in the body which is by it made white. For when the body has been changed into another color, that whiteness will not remain, but will altogether cease to be. But if the Father who begat wisdom is also made wise by it, and to be is not to Him the same as to be wise, then the Son is His quality, not His offspring; and there will no longer be absolute simplicity in the Godhead. But far be it from being so, since in truth in the Godhead is absolutely simple essence, and therefore to be is there the same as to be wise. But if to be is there the same as to be wise, then the Father is not wise by that wisdom which He begat; otherwise He did not beget it, but

it begat Him. For what else do we say when we say, that to Him to be is the same as to be wise, unless that He is by that whereby He is wise? Wherefore, that which is the cause to Him of being wise, is itself also the cause to Him that He is; and accordingly, if the wisdom which He begat is the cause to Him of being wise, it is also the cause to Him that He is; and this cannot be the case, except either by begetting or by creating Him. But no one ever said in any sense that wisdom is either the begetter or the creator of the Father; for what could be more senseless? Therefore both the Father Himself is wisdom, and the Son is in such way called the wisdom of the Father, as He is called the light of the Father; that is, that in the same manner as light from light, and yet both one light, so we are to understand wisdom of wisdom, and yet both one wisdom; and therefore also one essence, since, in God, to be, is the same as to be wise. For what to be wise is to wisdom, and to be able is to power, and to be eternal is to eternity, and to be just to justice, and to be great to greatness, that being itself is to essence. And since in the Divine simplicity, to be wise is nothing else than to be, therefore wisdom there is the same as essence.

## CHAPTER 2

THE FATHER AND THE SON ARE TOGETHER ONE WISDOM, AS ONE ESSENCE,  
ALTHOUGH NOT TOGETHER ONE WORD

3. Therefore the Father and the Son together are one essence, and one greatness, and one truth, and one wisdom. But the Father and Son both together are not one Word, because both together are not one Son. For as the Son is referred to the Father, and is not so called in respect to Himself, so also the Word is referred to him whose Word it is, when it is called the Word. Since He is the Son in that He is the Word, and He is the Word in that He is the Son. Inasmuch, therefore, as the Father and the Son together are certainly not one Son, it follows that the Father and the Son together are not the one Word of both. And therefore He is not the Word in that He is wisdom; since He is not called the Word in respect to Himself, but only relatively to Him whose Word He is, as He is called the Son in relation to the Father; but He is wisdom by that whereby He is essence. And therefore, because one essence, one wisdom. But since the Word is also wisdom, yet is not thereby the Word because He is wisdom for He is understood to be the

Word relatively, but wisdom essentially: let us understand, that when He is called the Word, it is meant, wisdom that is born, so as to be both the Son and the Image; and that when these two words are used, namely wisdom (is) born, in one of the two, namely born, both Word, and Image, and Son, are understood, and in all these names essence is not expressed, since they are spoken relatively; but in the other word, namely wisdom, since it is spoken also in respect to substance, for wisdom is wise in itself, essence also is expressed, and that being of His which is to be wise. Whence the Father and Son together are one wisdom, because one essence, and singly wisdom of wisdom, as essence of essence. And hence they are not therefore not one essence, because the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, or because the Father is un-begotten, but the Son is begotten: since by these names only their relative attributes are expressed. But both together are one wisdom and one essence; in which to be, is the same as to be wise. And both together are not the Word or the Son, since to be is not the same as to be the Word or the Son, as we have already sufficiently shown that these terms are spoken relatively.

### CHAPTER 3

WHY THE SON CHIEFLY IS INTIMATED IN THE SCRIPTURES BY THE NAME OF WISDOM, WHILE BOTH THE FATHER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE WISDOM. THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT, TOGETHER WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON, IS ONE WISDOM

4. Why, then, is scarcely anything ever said in the Scriptures of wisdom, unless to show that it is begotten or created of God?—begotten in the case of that Wisdom by which all things are made; but created or made, as in men, when they are converted to that Wisdom which is not created and made but begotten, and are so enlightened; for in these men themselves there comes to be something which may be called their wisdom: even as the Scriptures foretell or narrate, that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;” for in this way Christ was made wisdom, because He was made man. Is it on this account that wisdom does not speak in these books, nor is anything spoken of it, except to declare that it is born of God, or made by Him (although the Father is Himself wisdom), namely, because wisdom ought to be commended and imitated by us, by the imitation of which we are fashioned [rightly]? For the Father speaks it, that it may be His Word:



yet not as a word producing a sound proceeds from the mouth, or is thought before it is pronounced. For this word is completed in certain spaces of time, but that is eternal, and speaks to us by enlightening us, what ought to be spoken to men, both of itself and of the Father. And therefore He says, “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him:” since the Father reveals by the Son, that is, by His Word. For if that word which we utter, and which is temporal and transitory, declares both itself, and that of which we speak, how much more the Word of God, by which all things are made? For this Word so declares the Father as He is the Father; because both itself so is, and is that which is the Father, in so far as it is wisdom and essence. For in so far as it is the Word, it is not what the Father is; because the Word is not the Father, and Word is spoken relatively, as is also Son, which assuredly is not the Father. And therefore Christ is the power and wisdom of God, because He Himself, being also power and wisdom, is from the Father, who is power and wisdom; as He is light of the Father, who is light, and the fountain of life with God the Father, who is Himself assuredly the fountain of life. For “with Thee,” He says, “is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light.” Because, “as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself:” and, “He was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world:” and this light, “the Word,” was “with God;” but “the Word also was God;” and “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all:” but a light that is not corporeal, but spiritual; yet not in such way spiritual, that it was wrought by illumination, as it was said to the apostles, “Ye are the light of the world,” but “the light which lighteth every man,” that very supreme wisdom itself who is God, of whom we now treat. The Son therefore is Wisdom of wisdom, namely the Father, as He is Light of light, and God of God; so that both the Father singly is light, and the Son singly is light; and the Father singly is God, and the Son singly is God: therefore the Father also singly is wisdom, and the Son singly is wisdom. And as both together are one light and one God, so both are one wisdom. But the Son is “by God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification;” because we turn ourselves to Him in time, that is, from some particular time, that we may remain with Him for ever. And He Himself from a certain time was “the Word made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

5. On this account, then, when anything concerning wisdom is declared or narrated in the Scriptures, whether as itself speaking, or where anything is spoken of it, the Son chiefly is intimated to us. And by the example of Him who is the image, let us also not depart from God, since we also are the Image of God: not indeed that which is equal to Him, since we are made so by the Father through the Son, and not born of the Father, as that is. And we are so, because we are enlightened with light; but that is so, because it is the light that enlightens; and which, therefore, being without pattern, is to us a pattern. For He does not imitate any one going before Him, in respect to the Father, from whom He is never separable at all, since He is the very same substance with Him from whom He is. But we by striving imitate Him who abides, and follow Him who stands still, and walking in Him, reach out towards Him; because He is made for us a way in time by His humiliation, which is to us an eternal abiding-place by His divinity. For since to pure intellectual spirits, who have not fallen through pride, He gives an example in the form of God and as equal with God and as God; so, in order that He might also give Himself as an example of returning to fallen man who on account of the uncleanness of sins and the punishment of mortality cannot see God, “He emptied Himself;” not by changing His own divinity, but by assuming our changeableness: and “taking upon Him the form of a servant” He came to us into this world,” who “was in this world,” because “the world was made by Him;” that He might be an example upwards to those who see God, an example downwards to those who admire man, an example to the sound to persevere, an example to the sick to be made whole, an example to those who are to die that they may not fear, an example to the dead that they may rise again, “that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.” So that, because man ought not to follow any except God to blessedness, and yet cannot perceive God; by following God made man, he might follow at once Him whom he could perceive, and whom he ought to follow. Let us then love Him and cleave to Him, by charity spread abroad in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if, on account of the example which the Image, which is equal to the Father, gives to us, in order that we may be refashioned after the image of God, Scripture, when it speaks of wisdom, speaks of the Son, whom we follow by living wisely; although the Father also is wisdom, as He is both light and God.

6. The Holy Spirit also, whether we are to call Him that absolute love which joins together Father and Son, and joins us also from beneath, that so that is not unfitly said which is written, “God is love;” how is He not also Himself wisdom, since He is light, because “God is light”? or whether after any other way the essence of the Holy Spirit is to be singly and properly named; then, too, since He is God, He is certainly light; and since He is light, He is certainly wisdom. But that the Holy Spirit is God, Scripture proclaims by the apostle, who says, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?” and immediately subjoins, “And the Spirit of God dwelleth in you;” for God dwelleth in His own temple. For the Spirit of God does not dwell in the temple of God as a servant, since he says more plainly in another place, “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a great price: therefore glorify God in your body.” But what is wisdom, except spiritual and unchangeable light? For yonder sun also is light, but it is corporeal; and the spiritual creature also is light, but it is not unchangeable. Therefore the Father is light, the Son is light, and the Holy Spirit is light; but together not three lights, but one light. And so the Father is wisdom, the Son is wisdom, and the Holy Spirit is wisdom, and together not three wisdoms, but one wisdom: and because in the Trinity to be is the same as to be wise, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one essence. Neither in the Trinity is it one thing to be and another to be God; therefore the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one God.

#### CHAPTER 4

HOW IT WAS BROUGHT ABOUT THAT THE GREEKS SPEAK OF THREE HYPOSTASES, THE LATINS OF THREE PERSONS. SCRIPTURE NOWHERE SPEAKS OF THREE PERSONS IN ONE GOD

7. For the sake, then, of speaking of things that cannot be uttered, that we may be able in some way to utter what we are able in no way to utter fully, our Greek friends have spoken of one essence, three substances; but the Latins of one essence or substance, three persons; because, as we have already said, essence usually means nothing else than substance in our language, that is, in Latin. And provided that what is said is understood only in a mystery, such a way of speaking was sufficient, in order that there

might be something to say when it was asked what the three are, which the true faith pronounces to be three, when it both declares that the Father is not the Son, and that the Holy Spirit, which is the gift of God, is neither the Father nor the Son. When, then, it is asked what the three are, or who the three are, we betake ourselves to the finding out of some special or general name under which we may embrace these three; and no such name occurs to the mind, because the super-eminence of the Godhead surpasses the power of customary speech. For God is more truly thought than He is altered, and exists more truly than He is thought. For when we say that Jacob was not the same as Abraham, but that Isaac was neither Abraham nor Jacob, certainly we confess that they are three, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But when it is asked what three, we reply three men, calling them in the plural by a specific name; but if we were to say three animals, then by a generic name; for man, as the ancients have defined him, is a rational, mortal animal: or again, as our Scriptures usually speak, three souls, since it is fitting to denominate the whole from the better part, that is, to denominate both body and soul, which is the whole man, from the soul; for so it is said that seventy-five souls went down into Egypt with Jacob, instead of saying so many men. Again, when we say that your horse is not mine, and that a third belonging to some one else is neither mine nor yours, then we confess that there are three; and if any one ask what three, we answer three horses by a specific name, but three animals by a generic one. And yet again, when we say that an ox is not a horse, but that a dog is neither an ox nor a horse, we speak of a three; and if any one questions us what three, we do not speak now by a specific name of three horses, or three oxen, or three dogs, because the three are not contained under the same species, but by a generic name, three animals; or if under a higher genus, three substances, or three creatures, or three natures. But whatsoever things are expressed in the plural number specifically by one name, can also be expressed generically by one name. But all things which are generically called by one name cannot also be called specifically by one name. For three horses, which is a specific name, we also call three animals; but, a horse, and an ox, and a dog, we call only three animals or substances, which are generic names, or anything else that can be spoken generically concerning them; but we cannot speak of them as three horses, or oxen, or dogs, which are specific names; for we express those things by one name,

although in the plural number, which have that in common that is signified by the name. For Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, have in common that which is man; therefore they are called three men: a horse also, and an ox, and a dog, have in common that which is animal; therefore they are called three animals. So three several laurels we also call three trees; but a laurel, and a myrtle, and an olive, we call only three trees, or three substances, or three natures: and so three stones we call also three bodies; but stone, and wood, and iron, we call only three bodies, or by any other higher generic name by which they can be called. Of the Father, therefore, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, seeing that they are three, let us ask what three they are, and what they have in common. For the being the Father is not common to them, so that they should be interchangeably fathers to one another: as friends, since they are so called relatively to each other, can be called three friends, because they are so mutually to each other. But this is not the case in the Trinity, since the Father only is there father; and not Father of two, but of the Son only. Neither are they three Sons, since the Father there is not the Son, nor is the Holy Spirit. Neither three Holy Spirits, because the Holy Spirit also, in that proper meaning by which He is also called the gift of God, is neither the Father nor the Son. What three therefore? For if three persons, then that which is meant by person is common to them; therefore this name is either specific or generic to them, according to the manner of speaking. But where there is no difference of nature, there things that are several in number are so expressed generically, that they can also be expressed specifically. For the difference of nature causes, that a laurel, and a myrtle, and an olive, or a horse, and an ox, and a dog, are not called by the specific name, the former of three laurels, or the latter of three oxen, but by the generic name, the former of three trees, and the latter of three animals. But here, where there is no difference of essence, it is necessary that these three should have a specific name, which yet is not to be found. For person is a generic name, insomuch that man also can be so called, although there is so great a difference between man and God.

8. Further, in regard to that very generic (*generalis*) word, if on this account we say three persons, because that which person means is common to them (otherwise they can in no way be so called, just as they are not called three sons, because that which son means is not common to them); why do we

not also say three Gods? For certainly, since the Father is a person, and the Son a person, and the Holy Spirit a person, therefore there are three persons: since then the Father is God, and the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God, why not three Gods? Or else, since on account of their ineffable union these three are together one God, why not also one person; so that we could not say three persons, although we call each a person singly, just as we cannot say three Gods, although we call each singly God, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit? Is it because Scripture does not say three Gods? But neither do we find that Scripture anywhere mentions three persons. Or is it because Scripture does not call these three, either three persons or one person (for we read of the person of the Lord, but not of the Lord as a person), that therefore it was lawful through the mere necessity of speaking and reasoning to say three persons, not because Scripture says it, but because Scripture does not contradict it: whereas, if we were to say three Gods, Scripture would contradict it, which says, "Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one God?" Why then is it not also lawful to say three essences; which, in like manner, as Scripture does not say, so neither does it contradict? For if essence is a specific (*specialis*) name common to three, why are They not to be called three essences, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are called three men, because man is the specific name common to all men? But if essence is not a specific name, but a generic one, since man, and cattle, and tree, and constellation, and angel, are called essences; why are not these called three essences, as three horses are called three animals, and three laurels are called three trees, and three stones three bodies? Or if they are not called three essences, but one essence, on account of the unity of the Trinity, why is it not the case, that on account of the same unity of the Trinity they are not to be called three substances or three persons, but one substance and one person? For as the name of essence is common to them, so that each singly is called essence, so the name of either substance or person is common to them. For that which must be understood of persons according to our usage, this is to be understood of substances according to the Greek usage; for they say three substances, one essence, in the same way as we say three persons, one essence or substance.

9. What therefore remains, except that we confess that these terms sprang from the necessity of speaking, when copious reasoning was required

against the devices or errors of the heretics? For when human weakness endeavored to utter in speech to the senses of man what it grasps in the secret places of the mind in proportion to its comprehension respecting the Lord God its creator, whether by devout faith, or by any discernment whatsoever; it feared to say three essences, lest any difference should be understood to exist in that absolute equality. Again, it could not say that there were not three somewhats (*tria quaedam*), for it was because Sabellius said this that he fell into heresy. For it must be devoutly believed, as most certainly known from the Scriptures, and must be grasped by the mental eye with undoubting perception, that there is both Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit; and that the Son is not the same with the Father, nor the Holy Spirit the same with the Father or the Son. It sought then what three it should call them, and answered substances or persons; by which names it did not intend diversity to be meant, but singleness to be denied: that not only unity might be understood therein from the being called one essence, but also Trinity from the being called three substances or persons. For if it is the same thing with God to be (*esse*) as to subsist (*subsistere*), they were not to be called three substances, in such sense as they are not called three essences; just as, because it is the same thing with God to be as to be wise, as we do not say three essences, so neither three wisdoms. For so, because it is the same thing to Him to be God as to be, it is not right to say three essences, as it is not right to say three Gods. But if it is one thing to God to be, another to subsist, as it is one thing to God to be, another to be the Father or the Lord (for that which He is, is spoken in respect to Himself, but He is called Father in relation to the Son, and Lord in relation to the creature which serves Him); therefore He subsists relatively, as He begets relatively, and bears rule relatively: so then substance will be no longer substance, because it will be relative. For as from being, He is called essence, so from subsisting, we speak of substance. But it is absurd that substance should be spoken relatively, for everything subsists in respect to itself; how much more God?

## CHAPTER 5

IN GOD, SUBSTANCE IS SPOKEN IMPROPERLY, ESSENCE PROPERLY

10. If, however, it is fitting that God should be said to subsist—(For this word is rightly applied to those things, in which as subjects those things are, which are said to be in a subject, as color or shape in body. For body subsists, and so is substance; but those things are in the body, which subsists and is their subject, and they are not substances, but are in a substance: and so, if either that color or that shape ceases to be, it does not deprive the body of being a body, because it is not of the being of body, that it should retain this or that shape or color; therefore neither changeable nor simple things are properly called substances.)—If, I say, God subsists so that He can be properly called a substance, then there is something in Him as it were in a subject, and He is not simple, i.e. such that to Him to be is the same as is anything else that is said concerning Him in respect to Himself; as, for instance, great, omnipotent, good, and whatever of this kind is not unfitly said of God. But it is an impiety to say that God subsists, and is a subject in relation to His own goodness, and that this goodness is not a substance or rather essence, and that God Himself is not His own goodness, but that it is in Him as in a subject. And hence it is clear that God is improperly called substance, in order that He may be understood to be, by the more usual name essence, which He is truly and properly called; so that perhaps it is right that God alone should be called essence. For He is truly alone, because He is unchangeable; and declared this to be His own name to His servant Moses, when He says, “I am that I am;” and, “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: He who is hath sent me unto you.” However, whether He be called essence, which He is properly called, or substance, which He is called improperly, He is called both in respect to Himself, not relatively to anything; whence to God to be is the same thing as to subsist; and so the Trinity, if one essence, is also one substance. Perhaps therefore they are more conveniently called three persons than three substances.

## CHAPTER 6

WHY WE DO NOT IN THE TRINITY SPEAK OF ONE PERSON, AND THREE ESSENCES.  
WHAT HE OUGHT TO BELIEVE CONCERNING THE TRINITY WHO DOES NOT RECEIVE  
WHAT IS SAID ABOVE. MAN IS BOTH AFTER THE IMAGE, AND IS THE IMAGE OF GOD

11. But lest I should seem to favor ourselves [the Latins], let us make this further inquiry. Although they [the Greeks] also, if they pleased, as they call



three substances three hypostases, so might call three persons three “prosopa,” yet they preferred that word which, perhaps, was more in accordance with the usage of their language. For the case is the same with the word persons also; for to God it is not one thing to be, another to be a person, but it is absolutely the same thing. For if to be is said in respect to Himself, but person relatively; in this way we should say three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; just as we speak of three friends, or three relations, or three neighbors, in that they are so mutually, not that each one of them is so in respect to himself. Wherefore any one of these is the friend of the other two, or the relation, or the neighbor, because these names have a relative signification. What then? Are we to call the Father the person of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, or the Son the person of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit the person of the Father and of the Son? But neither is the word person commonly so used in any case; nor in this Trinity, when we speak of the person of the Father, do we mean anything else than the substance of the Father. Wherefore, as the substance of the Father is the Father Himself, not as He is the Father, but as He is, so also the person of the Father is not anything else than the Father Himself; for He is called a person in respect to Himself, not in respect to the Son, or the Holy Spirit: just as He is called in respect to Himself both God and great, and good, and just, and anything else of the kind; and just as to Him to be is the same as to be God, or as to be great, or as to be good, so it is the same thing to Him to be, as to be a person. Why, therefore, do we not call these three together one person, as one essence and one God, but say three persons, while we do not say three Gods or three essences; unless it be because we wish some one word to serve for that meaning whereby the Trinity is understood, that we might not be altogether silent, when asked, what three, while we confessed that they are three? For if essence is the genus, and substance or person the species, as some think, then I must omit what I just now said, that they ought to be called three essences, as they are called three substances or persons; as three horses are called three horses, and the same are called three animals, since horse is the species, animal the genus. For in this case the species is not spoken of in the plural, and the genus in the singular, as if we were to say that three horses were one animal; but as they are three horses by the special name, so they are three animals by the generic one. But if they say that the name of substance or

person does not signify species, but something singular and individual; so that any one is not so called a substance or person as he is called a man, for man is common to all men, but in the same manner as he is called this or that man, as Abraham, as Isaac, as Jacob, or anyone else who, if present, could be pointed out with the finger: so will the same reason reach these too. For as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are called three individuals, so are they called three men, and three souls. Why then are both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, if we are to reason about them also according to genus and species and individual, not so called three essences, as they are called three substances or persons? But this, as I said, I pass over: but I do affirm, that if essence is a genus, then a single essence has no species; just as, because animal is a genus, a single animal has no species. Therefore the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three species of one essence. But if essence is a species, as man is a species, but those are three which we call substances or persons, then they have the same species in common, in such way as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have in common the species which is called man; not as man is subdivided into Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so can one man also be subdivided into several single men; for this is altogether impossible, since one man is already a single man. Why then is one essence subdivided into three substances or persons? For if essence is a species, as man is, then one essence is as one man is: or do we, as we say that any three human beings of the same sex, of the same constitution of body, of the same mind, are one nature,—for they are three human beings, but one nature,—so also say in the Trinity three substances one essence, or three persons one substance or essence? But this is somehow a parallel case, since the ancients also who spoke Latin, before they had these terms, which have not long come into use, that is, essence or substance, used for them to say nature. We do not therefore use these terms according to genus or species, but as if according to a matter that is common and the same. Just as if three statues were made of the same gold, we should say three statues one gold, yet should neither call the gold genus, and the statues species; nor the gold species, and the statues individuals. For no species goes beyond its own individuals, so as to comprehend anything external to them. For when I define what man is, which is a specific name, every several man that exists is contained in the same individual definition, neither does anything belong to it which is not a man. But when I define gold, not statues alone, if they

be gold, but rings also, and anything else that is made of gold, will belong to gold; and even if nothing were made of it, it would still be called gold; since, even if there were no gold statues, there will not therefore be no statues at all. Likewise no species goes beyond the definition of its genus. For when I define animal, since horse is a species of this genus, every horse is an animal; but every statue is not gold. So, although in the case of three golden statues we should rightly say three statues, one gold; yet we do not so say it, as to understand gold to be the genus, and the statues to be species. Therefore neither do we so call the Trinity three persons or substances, one essence and one God, as though three somethings subsisted out of one matter [leaving a remainder, i. e.]; although whatever that is, it is unfolded in these three. For there is nothing else of that essence besides the Trinity. Yet we say three persons of the same essence, or three persons one essence; but we do not say three persons out of the same essence, as though therein essence were one thing, and person another, as we can say three statues out of the same gold; for there it is one thing to be gold, another to be statues. And when we say three men one nature, or three men of the same nature, they also can be called three men out of the same nature, since out of the same nature there can be also three other such men. But in that essence of the Trinity, in no way can any other person whatever exist out of the same essence. Further, in these things, one man is not as much as three men together; and two men are something more than one man: and in equal statues, three together amount to more of gold than each singly, and one amounts to less of gold than two. But in God it is not so; for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit together is not a greater essence than the Father alone or the Son alone; but these three substances or persons, if they must be so called, together are equal to each singly: which the natural man does not comprehend. For he cannot think except under the conditions of bulk and space, either small or great, since phantasms or as it were images of bodies flit about in his mind.

12. And until he be purged from this uncleanness, let him believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, alone, great, omnipotent, good, just, merciful, Creator of all things visible and invisible, and whatsoever can be worthily and truly said of Him in proportion to human capacity. And when he is told that the Father only is God, let him not separate from Him the Son

or the Holy Spirit; for together with Him He is the only God, together with whom also He is one God; because, when we are told that the Son also is the only God, we must needs take it without any separation of the Father or the Holy Spirit. And let him so say one essence, as not to think one to be either greater or better than, or in any respect differing from, another. Yet not that the Father Himself is both Son and Holy Spirit, or whatever else each is singly called in relation to either of the others; as Word, which is not said except of the Son, or Gift, which is not said except of the Holy Spirit. And on this account also they admit the plural number, as it is written in the Gospel, "I and my Father are one." He has both said "one," and "we are one," according to essence, because they are the same God; "we are," according to relation, because the one is Father, the other is Son. Sometimes also the unity of the essence is left unexpressed, and the relatives alone are mentioned in the plural number: "My Father and I will come unto him, and make our abode with him." We will come, and we will make our abode, is the plural number, since it was said before, "I and my Father," that is, the Son and the Father, which terms are used relatively to one another. Sometimes the meaning is altogether latent, as in Genesis: "Let us make man after our image and likeness." Both let us make and our is said in the plural, and ought not to be received except as of relatives. For it was not that gods might make, or make after the image and likeness of gods; but that the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit might make after the image of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, that man might subsist as the image of God. And God is the Trinity. But because that image of God was not made altogether equal to Him, as being not born of Him, but created by Him; in order to signify this, he is in such way the image as that he is "after the image," that is, he is not made equal by parity, but approaches to Him by a sort of likeness. For approach to God is not by intervals of place, but by likeness, and withdrawal from Him is by unlikeness. For there are some who draw this distinction, that they will have the Son to be the image, but man not to be the image, but "after the image." But the apostle refutes them, saying, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." He did not say after the image, but the image. And this image, since it is elsewhere spoken of as after the image, is not as if it were said relatively to the Son, who is the image equal to the Father; otherwise he would not say after our image. For how our, when the Son is

the image of the Father alone? But man is said to be “after the image,” on account, as we have said, of the inequality of the likeness; and therefore after our image, that man might be the image of the Trinity; not equal to the Trinity as the Son is equal to the Father, but approaching to it, as has been said, by a certain likeness; just as nearness may in a sense be signified in things distant from each other, not in respect of place, but of a sort of imitation. For it is also said, “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind;” to whom he likewise says, “Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children.” For it is said to the new man, “which is renewed to the knowledge of God, after the image of Him that created him.” Or if we choose to admit the plural number, in order to meet the needs of argument, even putting aside relative terms, that so we may answer in one term when it is asked what three, and say three substances or three persons; then let no one think of any bulk or interval, or of any distance of howsoever little unlikeness, so that in the Trinity any should be understood to be even a little less than another, in whatsoever way one thing can be less than another: in order that there may be neither a confusion of persons, nor such a distinction as that there should be any inequality. And if this cannot be grasped by the understanding, let it be held by faith, until He shall dawn in the heart who says by the prophet, “If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not understand.”

# Book VIII

Explains and proves that not only the Father is not greater than the Son, but neither are both together anything greater than the Holy Spirit, nor any two together in the same trinity anything greater than one, nor all three together anything greater than each severally. It is then shown how the nature itself of God may be understood from our understanding of truth, and from our knowledge of the supreme good, and from the innate love of righteousness, whereby a righteous soul is loved even by a soul that is itself not yet righteous. But it is urged above all, that the knowledge of God is to be sought by love, which God is said to be in the Scriptures; and in this love is also pointed out the existence of some trace of a trinity.

## PREFACE

THE CONCLUSION OF WHAT HAS BEEN SAID ABOVE. THE RULE TO BE OBSERVED IN THE MORE DIFFICULT QUESTIONS OF THE FAITH

We have said elsewhere that those things are predicated specially in the Trinity as belonging severally to each person, which are predicated relatively the one to the other, as Father and Son, and the gift of both, the Holy Spirit; for the Father is not the Trinity, nor the Son the Trinity, nor the gift the Trinity: but what whenever each is singly spoken of in respect to themselves, then they are not spoken of as three in the plural number, but one, the Trinity itself, as the Father God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; the Father good, the Son good, and the Holy Spirit good; and the Father omnipotent, the Son omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit omnipotent: yet neither three Gods, nor three goods, nor three omnipotents, but one God, good, omnipotent, the Trinity itself; and whatsoever else is said of them not relatively in respect to each other, but individually in respect to themselves. For they are thus spoken of according to essence, since in them to be is the same as to be great, as to be good, as to be wise, and whatever else is said

of each person individually therein, or of the Trinity itself, in respect to themselves. And that therefore they are called three persons, or three substances, not in order that any difference of essence may be understood, but that we may be able to answer by some one word, should any one ask what three, or what three things? And that there is so great an equality in that Trinity, that not only the Father is not greater than the Son, as regards divinity, but neither are the Father and Son together greater than the Holy Spirit; nor is each individual person, whichever it be of the three, less than the Trinity itself. This is what we have said; and if it is handled and repeated frequently, it becomes, no doubt, more familiarly known: yet some limit, too, must be put to the discussion, and we must supplicate God with most devout piety, that He will open our understanding, and take away the inclination of disputing, in order that our minds may discern the essence of the truth, that has neither bulk nor moveableness. Now, therefore, so far as the Creator Himself aids us in His marvellous mercy, let us consider these subjects, into which we will enter more deeply than we entered into those which preceded, although they are in truth the same; preserving the while this rule, that what has not yet been made clear to our intellect, be nevertheless not loosened from the firmness of our faith.

## CHAPTER 1

IT IS SHOWN BY REASON THAT IN GOD THREE ARE NOT ANYTHING GREATER THAN ONE PERSON

2. For we say that in this Trinity two or three persons are not anything greater than one of them; which carnal perception does not receive, for no other reason except because it perceives as it can the true things which are created, but cannot discern the truth itself by which they are created; for if it could, then the very corporeal light would in no way be more clear than this which we have said. For in respect to the substance of truth, since it alone truly is, nothing is greater, unless because it more truly is. But in respect to whatsoever is intelligible and unchangeable, no one thing is more truly than another, since all alike are unchangeably eternal; and that which therein is called great, is not great from any other source than from that by which it truly is. Wherefore, where magnitude itself is truth, whatsoever has more of magnitude must needs have more of truth; whatsoever therefore has not

more of truth, has not also more of magnitude. Further, whatsoever has more of truth is certainly more true, just as that is greater which has more of magnitude; therefore in respect to the substance of truth that is more great which is more true. But the Father and the Son together are not more truly than the Father singly, or the Son singly. Both together, therefore, are not anything greater than each of them singly. And since also the Holy Spirit equally is truly, the Father and Son together are not anything greater than He, since neither are they more truly. The Father also and the Holy Spirit together, since they do not surpass the Son in truth (for they are not more truly), do not surpass Him either in magnitude. And so the Son and the Holy Spirit together are just as great as the Father alone, since they are as truly. So also the Trinity itself is as great as each several person therein. For where truth itself is magnitude, that is not more great which is not more true: since in regard to the essence of truth, to be true is the same as to be, and to be is the same as to be great; therefore to be great is the same as to be true. And in regard to it, therefore, what is equally true must needs also be equally great.

## CHAPTER 2

EVERY CORPOREAL CONCEPTION MUST BE REJECTED, IN ORDER THAT IT MAY BE UNDERSTOOD HOW GOD IS TRUTH

3. But in respect to bodies, it may be the case that this gold and that gold may be equally true [real], but this may be greater than that, since magnitude is not the same thing in this case as truth; and it is one thing for it to be gold, another to be great. So also in the nature of the soul; a soul is not called great in the same respect in which it is called true. For he, too, has a true [real] soul who has not a great soul; since the essence of body and soul is not the essence of the truth [reality] itself; as is the Trinity, one God, alone, great, true, truthful, the truth. Of whom if we endeavor to think, so far as He Himself permits and grants, let us not think of any touch or embrace in local space, as if of three bodies, or of any compactness of conjunction, as fables tell of three-bodied Geryon; but let whatsoever may occur to the mind, that is of such sort as to be greater in three than in each singly, and less in one than in two, be rejected without any doubt; for so everything corporeal is rejected. But also in spiritual things let nothing



changeable that may have occurred to the mind be thought of God. For when we aspire from this depth to that height, it is a step towards no small knowledge, if, before we can know what God is, we can already know what He is not. For certainly He is neither earth nor heaven; nor, as it were, earth and heaven; nor any such thing as we see in the heaven; nor any such thing as we do not see, but which perhaps is in heaven. Neither if you were to magnify in the imagination of your thought the light of the sun as much as you are able, either that it may be greater, or that it may be brighter, a thousand times as much, or times without number; neither is this God. Neither as we think of the pure angels as spirits animating celestial bodies, and changing and dealing with them after the will by which they serve God; not even if all, and there are “thousands of thousands,” were brought together into one, and became one; neither is any such thing God. Neither if you were to think of the same spirits as without bodies—a thing indeed most difficult for carnal thought to do. Behold and see, if thou canst, O soul pressed down by the corruptible body, and weighed down by earthly thoughts, many and various; behold and see, if thou canst, that God is truth. For it is written that “God is light;” not in such way as these eyes see, but in such way as the heart sees, when it is said, He is truth [reality]. Ask not what is truth [reality] for immediately the darkness of corporeal images and the clouds of phantasms will put themselves in the way, and will disturb that calm which at the first twinkling shone forth to thee, when I said truth [reality]. See that thou remainest, if thou canst, in that first twinkling with which thou art dazzled, as it were, by a flash, when it is said to thee, Truth [Reality]. But thou canst not; thou wilt glide back into those usual and earthly things. And what weight, pray, is it that will cause thee so to glide back, unless it be the bird-lime of the stains of appetite thou hast contracted, and the errors of thy wandering from the right path?

### CHAPTER 3

HOW GOD MAY BE KNOWN TO BE THE CHIEF GOOD. THE MIND DOES NOT BECOME GOOD UNLESS BY TURNING TO GOD

4. Behold again, and see if thou canst. Thou certainly dost not love anything except what is good, since good is the earth, with the loftiness of its mountains, and the due measure of its hills, and the level surface of its

plains; and good is an estate that is pleasant and fertile; and good is a house that is arranged in due proportions, and is spacious and bright; and good are animal and animate bodies; and good is air that is temperate, and salubrious; and good is food that is agreeable and fit for health; and good is health, without pains or lassitude; and good is the countenance of man that is disposed in fit proportions, and is cheerful in look, and bright in color; and good is the mind of a friend, with the sweetness of agreement, and with the confidence of love; and good is a righteous man; and good are riches, since they are readily useful; and good is the heaven, with its sun, and moon, and stars; and good are the angels, by their holy obedience; and good is discourse that sweetly teaches and suitably admonishes the hearer; and good is a poem that is harmonious in its numbers and weighty in its sense. And why add yet more and more? This thing is good and that good, but take away this and that, and regard good itself if thou canst; so wilt thou see God, not good by a good that is other than Himself, but the good of all good. For in all these good things, whether those which I have mentioned, or any else that are to be discerned or thought, we could not say that one was better than another, when we judge truly, unless a conception of the good itself had been impressed upon us, such that according to it we might both approve some things as good, and prefer one good to another. So God is to be loved, not this and that good, but the good itself. For the good that must be sought for the soul is not one above which it is to fly by judging, but to which it is to cleave by loving; and what can this be except God? Not a good mind, or a good angel, or the good heaven, but the good good. For perhaps what I wish to say may be more easily perceived in this way. For when, for instance, a mind is called good, as there are two words, so from these words I understand two things—one whereby it is mind, and another whereby it is good. And itself had no share in making itself a mind, for there was nothing as yet to make itself to be anything; but to make itself to be a good mind, I see, must be brought about by the will: not because that by which it is mind is not itself anything good;—for how else is it already called, and most truly called, better than the body?—but it is not yet called a good mind, for this reason, that the action of the will still is wanted, by which it is to become more excellent; and if it has neglected this, then it is justly blamed, and is rightly called not a good mind. For it then differs from the mind which does perform this; and since the latter is praiseworthy, the

former doubtless, which does not perform, it is blameable. But when it does this of set purpose, and becomes a good mind, it yet cannot attain to being so unless it turn itself to something which itself is not. And to what can it turn itself that it may become a good mind, except to the good which it loves, and seeks, and obtains? And if it turns itself back again from this, and becomes not good, then by the very act of turning away from the good, unless that good remain in it from which it turns away, it cannot again turn itself back thither if it should wish to amend.

5. Wherefore there would be no changeable goods, unless there were the unchangeable good. Whenever then thou art told of this good thing and that good thing, which things can also in other respects be called not good, if thou canst put aside those things which are good by the participation of the good, and discern that good itself by the participation of which they are good (for when this or that good thing is spoken of, thou understandest together with them the good itself also): if, then, I say thou canst remove these things, and canst discern the good in itself, then thou wilt have discerned God. And if thou shalt cleave to Him with love, thou shalt be forthwith blessed. But whereas other things are not loved, except because they are good, be ashamed, in cleaving to them, not to love the good itself whence they are good. That also, which is a mind, only because it is a mind, while it is not yet also good by the turning itself to the unchangeable good, but, as I said, is only a mind; whenever it so pleases us, as that we prefer it even, if we understand aright, to all corporeal light, does not please us in itself, but in that skill by which it was made. For it is thence approved as made, wherein it is seen to have been to be made. This is truth, and simple good: for it is nothing else than the good itself, and for this reason also the chief good. For no good can be diminished or increased, except that which is good from some other good. Therefore the mind turns itself, in order to be good, to that by which it comes to be a mind. Therefore the will is then in harmony with nature, so that the mind may be perfected in good, when that good is loved by the turning of the will to it, whence that other good also comes which is not lost by the turning away of the will from it. For by turning itself from the chief good, the mind loses the being a good mind; but it does not lose the being a mind. And this, too, is a good already, and one better than the body. The will, therefore, loses that which the will

obtains. For the mind already was, that could wish to be turned to that from which it was: but that as yet was not, that could wish to be before it was. And herein is our [supreme] good, when we see whether the thing ought to be or to have been, respecting which we comprehend that it ought to be or to have been, and when we see that the thing could not have been unless it ought to have been, of which we also do not comprehend in what manner it ought to have been. This good then is not far from every one of us: for in it we live, and move, and have our being.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### GOD MUST FIRST BE KNOWN BY AN UNERRING FAITH, THAT HE MAY BE LOVED

6. But it is by love that we must stand firm to this and cleave to this, in order that we may enjoy the presence of that by which we are, and in the absence of which we could not be at all. For as “we walk as yet by faith, and not by sight,” we certainly do not yet see God, as the same [apostle] saith, “face to face:” whom however we shall never see, unless now already we love. But who loves what he does not know? For it is possible something may be known and not loved: but I ask whether it is possible that what is not known can be loved; since if it cannot, then no one loves God before he knows Him. And what is it to know God except to behold Him and steadfastly perceive Him with the mind? For He is not a body to be searched out by carnal eyes. But before also that we have power to behold and to perceive God, as He can be beheld and perceived, which is permitted to the pure in heart; for “blessed are the pure in heart. for they shall see God;” except He is loved by faith, it will not be possible for the heart to be cleansed, in order that it may be apt and meet to see Him. For where are there those three, in order to build up which in the mind the whole apparatus of the divine Scriptures has been raised up, namely Faith, Hope, and Charity, except in a mind believing what it does not yet see, and hoping and loving what it believes? Even He therefore who is not known, but yet is believed, can be loved. But indisputably we must take care, lest the mind believing that which it does not see, feign to itself something which is not, and hope for and love that which is false. For in that case, it will not be charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned, which is the end of the commandment, as the same apostle says.

7. But it must needs be, that, when by reading or hearing of them we believe in any corporeal things which we have not seen, the mind frames for itself something under bodily features and forms, just as it may occur to our thoughts; which either is not true, or even if it be true, which can most rarely happen, yet this is of no benefit to us to believe in by faith, but it is useful for some other purpose, which is intimated by means of it. For who is there that reads or hears what the Apostle Paul has written, or what has been written of him, that does not imagine to himself the countenance both of the apostle himself, and of all those whose names are there mentioned? And whereas, among such a multitude of men to whom these books are known, each imagines in a different way those bodily features and forms, it is assuredly uncertain which it is that imagines them more nearly and more like the reality. Nor, indeed, is our faith busied therein with the bodily countenance of those men; but only that by the grace of God they so lived and so acted as that Scripture witnesses: this it is which it is both useful to believe, and which must not be despaired of, and must be sought. For even the countenance of our Lord Himself in the flesh is variously fancied by the diversity of countless imaginations, which yet was one, whatever it was. Nor in our faith which we have of our Lord Jesus Christ, is that wholesome which the mind imagines for itself, perhaps far other than the reality, but that which we think of man according to his kind: for we have a notion of human nature implanted in us, as it were by rule, according to which we know forthwith, that whatever such thing we see is a man or the form of a man.

## CHAPTER 5

### HOW THE TRINITY MAY BE LOVED THOUGH UNKNOWN

Our conception is framed according to this notion, when we believe that God was made man for us, as an example of humility, and to show the love of God towards us. For this it is which it is good for us to believe, and to retain firmly and unshakenly in our heart, that the humility by which God was born of a woman, and was led to death through contumelies so great by mortal men, is the chiefest remedy by which the swelling of our pride may be cured, and the profound mystery by which the bond of sin may be loosed. So also, because we know what omnipotence is, we believe

concerning the omnipotent God in the power of His miracles and of His resurrection, and we frame conceptions respecting actions of this kind, according to the species and genera of things that are either ingrafted in us by nature, or gathered by experience, that our faith may not be feigned. For neither do we know the countenance of the Virgin Mary; from whom, untouched by a husband, nor tainted in the birth itself, He was wonderfully born. Neither have we seen what were the lineaments of the body of Lazarus; nor yet Bethany; nor the sepulchre, and that stone which He commanded to be removed when He raised Him from the dead; nor the new tomb cut out in the rock, whence He Himself arose; nor the Mount of Olives, from whence He ascended into heaven. And, in short, whoever of us have not seen these things, know not whether they are as we conceive them to be, nay judge them more probably not to be so. For when the aspect either of a place, or a man, or of any other body, which we happened to imagine before we saw it, turns out to be the same when it occurs to our sight as it was when it occurred to our mind, we are moved with no little wonder. So scarcely and hardly ever does it happen. And yet we believe those things most steadfastly, because we imagine them according to a special and general notion, of which we are certain. For we believe our Lord Jesus Christ to be born of a virgin who was called Mary. But what a virgin is, or what it is to be born, and what is a proper name, we do not believe, but certainly know. And whether that was the countenance of Mary which occurred to the mind in speaking of those things or recollecting them, we neither know at all, nor believe. It is allowable, then, in this case to say without violation of the faith, perhaps she had such or such a countenance, perhaps she had not: but no one could say without violation of the Christian faith, that perhaps Christ was born of a virgin.

8. Wherefore, since we desire to understand the eternity, and equality, and unity of the Trinity, as much as is permitted us, but ought to believe before we understand; and since we must watch carefully, that our faith be not feigned; since we must have the fruition of the same Trinity, that we may live blessedly; but if we have believed anything false of it, our hope would be worthless, and our charity not pure: how then can we love, by believing, that Trinity which we do not know? Is it according to the special or general notion, according to which we love the Apostle Paul? In whose case, even if

he was not of that countenance which occurs to us when we think of him (and this we do not know at all), yet we know what a man is. For not to go far away, this we are; and it is manifest he, too, was this, and that his soul joined to his body lived after the manner of mortals. Therefore we believe this of him, which we find in ourselves, according to the species or genus under which all human nature alike is comprised. What then do we know, whether specially or generally, of that most excellent Trinity, as if there were many such trinities, some of which we had learned by experience, so that we may believe that Trinity, too, to have been such as they, through the rule of similitude, impressed upon us, whether a special or a general notion; and thus love also that thing which we believe and do not yet know, from the parity of the thing which we do know? But this certainly is not so. Or is it that, as we love in our Lord Jesus Christ, that He rose from the dead, although we never saw any one rise from thence, so we can believe in and love the Trinity which we do not see, and the like of which we never have seen? But we certainly know what it is to die, and what it is to live; because we both live, and from time to time have seen and experienced both dead and dying persons. And what else is it to rise again, except to live again, that is, to return to life from death? When, therefore, we say and believe that there is a Trinity, we know what a Trinity is, because we know what three are; but this is not what we love. For we can easily have this whenever we will, to pass over other things, by just holding up three fingers. Or do we indeed love, not every trinity, but the Trinity, that is God? We love then in the Trinity, that it is God: but we never saw or knew any other God, because God is One; He alone whom we have not yet seen, and whom we love by believing. But the question is, from what likeness or comparison of known things can we believe, in order that we may love God, whom we do not yet know?

## CHAPTER 6

### HOW THE MAN NOT YET RIGHTEOUS CAN KNOW THE RIGHTEOUS MAN WHOM HE LOVES

9. Return then with me, and let us consider why we love the apostle. Is it at all on account of his human kind, which we know right well, in that we believe him to have been a man? Assuredly not; for if it were so, he now is

not him whom we love, since he is no longer that man, for his soul is separated from his body. But we believe that which we love in him to be still living, for we love his righteous mind. From what general or special rule then, except that we know both what a mind is, and what it is to be righteous? And we say, indeed, not unfitly, that we therefore know what a mind is, because we too have a mind. For neither did we ever see it with our eyes, and gather a special or general notion from the resemblance of more minds than one, which we had seen; but rather, as I have said before, because we too have it. For what is known so intimately, and so perceives itself to be itself, as that by which also all other things are perceived, that is, the mind itself? For we recognize the movements of bodies also, by which we perceive that others live besides ourselves, from the resemblance of ourselves; since we also so move our body in living as we observe those bodies to be moved. For even when a living body is moved, there is no way opened to our eyes to see the mind, a thing which cannot be seen by the eyes; but we perceive something to be contained in that bulk, such as is contained in ourselves, so as to move in like manner our own bulk, which is the life and the soul. Neither is this, as it were, the property of human foresight and reason, since brute animals also perceive that not only they themselves live, but also other brute animals interchangeably, and the one the other, and that we ourselves do so. Neither do they see our souls, save from the movements of the body, and that immediately and most easily by some natural agreement. Therefore we both know the mind of any one from our own, and believe also from our own of him whom we do not know. For not only do we perceive that there is a mind, but we can also know what a mind is, by reflecting upon our own: for we have a mind. But whence do we know what a righteous man is? For we said above that we love the apostle for no other reason except that he is a righteous mind. We know, then, what a righteous man also is, just as we know what a mind is. But what a mind is, as has been said, we know from ourselves, for there is a mind in us. But whence do we know what a righteous man is, if we are not righteous? But if no one but he who is righteous knows what is a righteous man, no one but a righteous man loves a righteous man; for one cannot love him whom one believes to be righteous, for this very reason that one does believe him to be righteous, if one does not know what it is to be righteous; according to that which we have shown above, that no one loves what he believes and does



not see, except by some rule of a general or special notion. And if for this reason no one but a righteous man loves a righteous man, how will any one wish to be a righteous man who is not yet so? For no one wishes to be that which he does not love. But, certainly, that he who is not righteous may be so, it is necessary that he should wish to be righteous; and in order that he may wish to be righteous, he loves the righteous man. Therefore, even he who is not yet righteous, loves the righteous man. But he cannot love the righteous man, who is ignorant what a righteous man is. Accordingly, even he who is not yet righteous, knows what a righteous man is. Whence then does he know this? Does he see it with his eyes? Is any corporeal thing righteous, as it is white, or black, or square, or round? Who could say this? Yet with one's eyes one has seen nothing except corporeal things. But there is nothing righteous in a man except the mind; and when a man is called a righteous man, he is called so from the mind, not from the body. For righteousness is in some sort the beauty of the mind, by which men are beautiful; very many too who are misshapen and deformed in body. And as the mind is not seen with the eyes, so neither is its beauty. From whence then does he who is not yet righteous know what a righteous man is, and love the righteous man that he may become righteous? Do certain signs shine forth by the motion of the body, by which this or that man is manifested to be righteous? But whence does any one know that these are the signs of a righteous mind when he is wholly ignorant what it is to be righteous? Therefore he does know. But whence do we know what it is to be righteous, even when we are not yet righteous? If we know from without ourselves, we know it by some bodily thing. But this is not a thing of the body. Therefore we know in ourselves what it is to be righteous. For I find this nowhere else when I seek to utter it, except within myself; and if I ask another what it is to be righteous, he seeks within himself what to answer; and whosoever hence can answer truly, he has found within himself what to answer. And when indeed I wish to speak of Carthage, I seek within myself what to speak, and I find within myself a notion or image of Carthage; but I have received this through the body, that is, through the perception of the body, since I have been present in that city in the body, and I saw and perceived it, and retained it in my memory, that I might find within myself a word concerning it, whenever I might wish to speak of it. For its word is the image itself of it in my memory, not that sound of two syllables when

Carthage is named, or even when that name itself is thought of silently from time to time, but that which I discern in my mind, when I utter that dissyllable with my voice, or even before I utter it. So also, when I wish to speak of Alexandria, which I never saw, an image of it is present with me. For whereas I had heard from many and had believed that city to be great, in such way as it could be told me, I formed an image of it in my mind as I was able; and this is with me its word when I wish to speak of it, before I utter with my voice the five syllables which make the name that almost every one knows. And yet if I could bring forth that image from my mind to the eyes of men who know Alexandria, certainly all either would say, It is not it; or if they said, It is, I should greatly wonder; and as I gazed at it in my mind, that is, at the image which was as it were its picture, I should yet not know it to be it, but should believe those who retained an image they had seen. But I do not so ask what it is to be righteous, nor do I so find it, nor do I so gaze upon it, when I utter it; neither am I so approved when I am heard, nor do I so approve when I hear; as though I have seen such a thing with my eyes, or learned it by some perception of the body, or heard it from those who had so learned it. For when I say, and say knowingly, that mind is righteous which knowingly and of purpose assigns to every one his due in life and behavior, I do not think of anything absent, as Carthage, or imagine it as I am able, as Alexandria, whether it be so or not; but I discern something present, and I discern it within myself, though I myself am not that which I discern; and many if they hear will approve it. And whoever hears me and knowingly approves, he too discerns this same thing within himself, even though he himself be not what he discerns. But when a righteous man says this, he discerns and says that which he himself is. And whence also does he discern it, except within himself? But this is not to be wondered at; for whence should he discern himself except within himself? The wonderful thing is, that the mind should see within itself that which it has seen nowhere else, and should see truly, and should see the very true righteous mind, and should itself be a mind, and yet not a righteous mind, which nevertheless it sees within itself. Is there another mind that is righteous in a mind that is not yet righteous? Or if there is not, what does it there see when it sees and says what is a righteous mind, nor sees it anywhere else but in itself, when itself is not a righteous mind? Is that which it sees an inner truth present to the mind which has power to behold

it? Yet all have not that power; and they who have power to behold it, are not all also that which they behold, that is, they are not also righteous minds themselves, just as they are able to see and to say what is a righteous mind. And whence will they be able to be so, except by cleaving to that very same form itself which they behold, so that from thence they may be formed and may be righteous minds; not only discerning and saying that the mind is righteous which knowingly and of purpose assigns to every one that which is his due in life and behavior, but so likewise that they themselves may live righteously and be righteous in character, by assigning to every one that which is his due, so as to owe no man anything, but to love one another. And whence can any one cleave to that form but by loving it? Why then do we love another whom we believe to be righteous, and do not love that form itself wherein we see what is a righteous mind, that we also may be able to be righteous? Is it that unless we loved that also, we should not love him at all, whom through it we love; but whilst we are not righteous, we love that form too little to allow of our being able to be righteous? The man therefore who is believed to be righteous, is loved through that form and truth which he who loves discerns and understands within himself; but that very form and truth itself cannot be loved from any other source than itself. For we do not find any other such thing besides itself, so that by believing we might love it when it is unknown, in that we here already know another such thing. For whatsoever of such a kind one may have seen, is itself; and there is not any other such thing, since itself alone is such as itself is. He therefore who loves men, ought to love them either because they are righteous, or that they may become righteous. For so also he ought to love himself, either because he is righteous, or that he may become righteous; for in this way he loves his neighbor as himself without any risk. For he who loves himself otherwise, loves himself wrongfully, since he loves himself to this end that he may be unrighteous; therefore to this end that he may be wicked; and hence it follows next that he does not love himself; for, “He who loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul.”

## CHAPTER 7

OF TRUE LOVE, BY WHICH WE ARRIVE AT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRINITY. GOD IS TO BE SOUGHT, NOT OUTWARDLY, BY SEEKING TO DO WONDERFUL THINGS WITH THE ANGELS, BUT INWARDLY, BY IMITATING THE PIETY OF GOOD ANGELS

10. No other thing, then, is chiefly to be regarded in this inquiry, which we make concerning the Trinity and concerning knowing God, except what is true love, nay, rather what is love. For that is to be called love which is true, otherwise it is desire; and so those who desire are said improperly to love, just as they who love are said improperly to desire. But this is true love, that cleaving to the truth we may live righteously, and so may despise all mortal things in comparison with the love of men, whereby we wish them to live righteously. For so we should be prepared also to die profitably for our brethren, as our Lord Jesus Christ taught us by His example. For as there are two commandments on which hang all the Law and the prophets, love of God and love of our neighbor; not without cause the Scripture mostly puts one for both: whether it be of God only, as is that text, “For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God;” and again, “But if any man love God, the same is known of Him;” and that, “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us;” and many other passages; because he who loves God must both needs do what God has commanded, and loves Him just in such proportion as he does so; therefore he must needs also love his neighbor, because God has commanded it: or whether it be that Scripture only mentions the love of our neighbor, as in that text, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ;” and again, “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;” and in the Gospel, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the prophets.” And many other passages occur in the sacred writings, in which only the love of our neighbor seems to be commanded for perfection, while the love of God is passed over in silence; whereas the Law and the prophets hang on both precepts. But this, too, is because he who loves his neighbor must needs also love above all else love itself. But “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.” Therefore he must needs above all else love God.

11. Wherefore they who seek God through those Powers which rule over the world, or parts of the world, are removed and cast away far from Him; not by intervals of space, but by difference of affections: for they endeavor to find a path outwardly, and forsake their own inward things, within which is God. Therefore, even although they may either have heard some holy

heavenly Power, or in some way or another may have thought of it, yet they rather covet its deeds at which human weakness marvels, but do not imitate the piety by which divine rest is acquired. For they prefer, through pride, to be able to do that which an angel does, more than, through devotion, to be that which an angel is. For no holy being rejoices in his own power, but in His from whom he has the power which he fitly can have; and he knows it to be more a mark of power to be united to the Omnipotent by a pious will, than to be able, by his own power and will, to do what they may tremble at who are not able to do such things. Therefore the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in doing such things, in order that He might teach better things to those who marvelled at them, and might turn those who were intent and in doubt about unusual temporal things to eternal and inner things, says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you." And He does not say, Learn of me, because I raise those who have been dead four days; but He says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." For humility, which is most solid, is more powerful and safer than pride, that is most inflated. And so He goes on to say, "And ye shall find rest unto your souls," for "Love is not puffed up;" and "God is Love;" and "such as be faithful in love shall rest in Him," called back from the din which is without to silent joys. Behold, "God is Love:" why do we go forth and run to the heights of the heavens and the lowest parts of the earth, seeking Him who is within us, if we wish to be with Him?

## CHAPTER 8

THAT HE WHO LOVES HIS BROTHER, LOVES GOD; BECAUSE HE LOVES LOVE ITSELF, WHICH IS OF GOD, AND IS GOD

12. Let no one say, I do not know what I love. Let him love his brother, and he will love the same love. For he knows the love with which he loves, more than the brother whom he loves. So now he can know God more than he knows his brother: clearly known more, because more present; known more, because more within him; known more, because more certain. Embrace the love of God, and by love embrace God. That is love itself, which associates together all good angels and all the servants of God by the bond of sanctity, and joins together us and them mutually with ourselves,

and joins us subordinately to Himself. In proportion, therefore, as we are healed from the swelling of pride, in such proportion are we more filled with love; and with what is he full, who is full of love, except with God? Well, but you will say, I see love, and, as far as I am able, I gaze upon it with my mind, and I believe the Scripture, saying, that “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God;” but when I see love, I do not see in it the Trinity. Nay, but thou dost see the Trinity if thou seest love. But if I can I will put you in mind, that thou mayest see that thou seest it; only let itself be present, that we may be moved by love to something good. Since, when we love love, we love one who loves something, and that on account of this very thing, that he does love something; therefore what does love love, that love itself also may be loved? For that is not love which loves nothing. But if it loves itself it must love something, that it may love itself as love. For as a word indicates something, and indicates also itself, but does not indicate itself to be a word, unless it indicates that it does indicate something; so love also loves indeed itself, but except it love itself as loving something, it loves itself not as love. What therefore does love love, except that which we love with love? But this, to begin from that which is nearest to us, is our brother. And listen how greatly the Apostle John commends brotherly love: “He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.” It is manifest that he placed the perfection of righteousness in the love of our brother; for he certainly is perfect in whom “there is no occasion of stumbling.” And yet he seems to have passed by the love of God in silence; which he never would have done, unless because he intends God to be understood in brotherly love itself. For in this same epistle, a little further on, he says most plainly thus: “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.” And this passage declares sufficiently and plainly, that this same brotherly love itself (for that is brotherly love by which we love each other) is set forth by so great authority, not only to be from God, but also to be God. When, therefore, we love our brother from love, we love our brother from God; neither can it be that we do not love above all else that same love by which we love our brother: whence it may be gathered that these two commandments cannot exist unless interchangeably. For since “God is love,” he who loves love certainly loves God; but he must

needs love love, who loves his brother. And so a little after he says, “For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen”? because the reason that he does not see God is, that he does not love his brother. For he who does not love his brother, abideth not in love; and he who abideth not in love, abideth not in God, because God is love. Further, he who abideth not in God, abideth not in light; for “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” He therefore who abideth not in light, what wonder is it if he does not see light, that is, does not see God, because he is in darkness? But he sees his brother with human sight, with which God cannot be seen. But if he loved with spiritual love him whom he sees with human sight, he would see God, who is love itself, with the inner sight by which He can be seen. Therefore he who does not love his brother whom he sees, how can he love God, whom on that account he does not see, because God is love, which he has not who does not love his brother? Neither let that further question disturb us, how much of love we ought to spend upon our brother, and how much upon God: incomparably more upon God than upon ourselves, but upon our brother as much as upon ourselves; and we love ourselves so much the more, the more we love God. Therefore we love God and our neighbor from one and the same love; but we love God for the sake of God, and ourselves and our neighbors for the sake of God.

## CHAPTER 9

### OUR LOVE OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS KINDLED FROM LOVE ITSELF OF THE UNCHANGEABLE FORM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

13. For why is it, pray, that we burn when we hear and read, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation: giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we

live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things?" Why is it that we are inflamed with love of the Apostle Paul, when we read these things, unless that we believe him so to have lived? But we do not believe that the ministers of God ought so to live because we have heard it from any one, but because we behold it inwardly within ourselves, or rather above ourselves, in the truth itself. Him, therefore, whom we believe to have so lived, we love for that which we see. And except we loved above all else that form which we discern as always steadfast and unchangeable, we should not for that reason love him, because we hold fast in our belief that his life, when he was living in the flesh, was adapted to, and in harmony with, this form. But somehow we are stirred up the more to the love of this form itself, through the belief by which we believe some one to have so lived; and to the hope by which we no more at all despair, that we, too, are able so to live; we who are men, from this fact itself, that some men have so lived, so that we both desire this more ardently, and pray for it more confidently. So both the love of that form, according to which they are believed to have lived, makes the life of these men themselves to be loved by us; and their life thus believed stirs up a more burning love towards that same form; so that the more ardently we love God, the more certainly and the more calmly do we see Him, because we behold in God the unchangeable form of righteousness, according to which we judge that man ought to live. Therefore faith avails to the knowledge and to the love of God, not as though of one altogether unknown, or altogether not loved; but so that thereby He may be known more clearly, and loved more steadfastly.

## CHAPTER 10

### THERE ARE THREE THINGS IN LOVE, AS IT WERE A TRACE OF THE TRINITY

14. But what is love or charity, which divine Scripture so greatly praises and proclaims, except the love of good? But love is of some one that loves, and with love something is loved. Behold, then, there are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. What, then, is love, except a certain life which couples or seeks to couple together some two things, namely, him that loves, and that which is loved? And this is so even in outward and carnal loves. But that we may drink in something more pure



and clear, let us tread down the flesh and ascend to the mind. What does the mind love in a friend except the mind? There, then, also are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. It remains to ascend also from hence, and to seek those things which are above, as far as is given to man. But here for a little while let our purpose rest, not that it may think itself to have found already what it seeks; but just as usually the place has first to be found where anything is to be sought, while the thing itself is not yet found, but we have only found already where to look for it; so let it suffice to have said thus much, that we may have, as it were, the hinge of some starting-point, whence to weave the rest of our discourse.

# Book IX

That a kind of trinity exists in man, who is the image of God, viz. the mind, and the knowledge wherewith the mind knows itself, and the love wherewith it loves both itself and its own knowledge; and these three are shown to be mutually equal, and of one essence.

## CHAPTER 1

### IN WHAT WAY WE MUST INQUIRE CONCERNING THE TRINITY

1. We certainly seek a trinity,—not any trinity, but that Trinity which is God, and the true and supreme and only God. Let my hearers then wait, for we are still seeking. And no one justly finds fault with such a search, if at least he who seeks that which either to know or to utter is most difficult, is steadfast in the faith. But whosoever either sees or teaches better, finds fault quickly and justly with any one who confidently affirms concerning it. “Seek God,” he says, “and your heart shall live;” and lest any one should rashly rejoice that he has, as it were, apprehended it, “Seek,” he says, “His face evermore.” And the apostle: “If any man,” he says, “think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of Him.” He has not said, has known Him, which is dangerous presumption, but “is known of Him.” So also in another place, when he had said, “But now after that ye have known God:” immediately correcting himself, he says, “or rather are known of God.” And above all in that other place, “Brethren,” he says, “I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press in purpose toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.” Perfection in this life, he tells us, is nothing else than to forget those things which are behind, and to reach forth and press in purpose toward those things which

are before. For he that seeks has the safest purpose, [who seeks] until that is taken hold of whither we are tending, and for which we are reaching forth. But that is the right purpose which starts from faith. For a certain faith is in some way the starting-point of knowledge; but a certain knowledge will not be made perfect, except after this life, when we shall see face to face. Let us therefore be thus minded, so as to know that the disposition to seek the truth is more safe than that which presumes things unknown to be known. Let us therefore so seek as if we should find, and so find as if we were about to seek. For “when a man hath done, then he beginneth.” Let us doubt without unbelief of things to be believed; let us affirm without rashness of things to be understood: authority must be held fast in the former, truth sought out in the latter. As regards this question, then, let us believe that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one God, the Creator and Ruler of the whole creature; and that the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Spirit either the Father or the Son, but a trinity of persons mutually interrelated, and a unity of an equal essence. And let us seek to understand this, praying for help from Himself, whom we wish to understand; and as much as He grants, desiring to explain what we understand with so much pious care and anxiety, that even if in any case we say one thing for another, we may at least say nothing unworthy. As, for the sake of example, if we say anything concerning the Father that does not properly belong to the Father, or does belong to the Son, or to the Holy Spirit, or to the Trinity itself; and if anything of the Son which does not properly suit with the Son, or at all events which does suit with the Father, or with the Holy Spirit, or with the Trinity; or if, again, anything concerning the Holy Spirit, which is not fitly a property of the Holy Spirit, yet is not alien from the Father, or from the Son, or from the one God the Trinity itself. Even as now our wish is to see whether the Holy Spirit is properly that love which is most excellent which if He is not, either the Father is love, or the Son, or the Trinity itself; since we cannot withstand the most certain faith and weighty authority of Scripture, saying, “God is love.” And yet we ought not to deviate into profane error, so as to say anything of the Trinity which does not suit the Creator, but rather the creature, or which is feigned outright by mere empty thought.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE THREE THINGS WHICH ARE FOUND IN LOVE MUST BE CONSIDERED

2. And this being so, let us direct our attention to those three things which we fancy we have found. We are not yet speaking of heavenly things, nor yet of God the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, but of that inadequate image, which yet is an image, that is, man; for our feeble mind perhaps can gaze upon this more familiarly and more easily. Well then, when I, who make this inquiry, love anything, there are three things concerned—myself, and that which I love, and love itself. For I do not love love, except I love a lover; for there is no love where nothing is loved. Therefore there are three things—he who loves, and that which is loved, and love. But what if I love none except myself? Will there not then be two things—that which I love, and love? For he who loves and that which is loved are the same when any one loves himself; just as to love and to be loved, in the same way, is the very same thing when any one loves himself. Since the same thing is said, when it is said, he loves himself, and he is loved by himself. For in that case to love and to be loved are not two different things: just as he who loves and he who is loved are not two different persons. But yet, even so, love and what is loved are still two things. For there is no love when any one loves himself, except when love itself is loved. But it is one thing to love one's self, another to love one's own love. For love is not loved, unless as already loving something; since where nothing is loved there is no love. Therefore there are two things when any one loves himself—love, and that which is loved. For then he that loves and that which is loved are one. Whence it seems that it does not follow that three things are to be understood wherever love is. For let us put aside from the inquiry all the other many things of which a man consists; and in order that we may discover clearly what we are now seeking, as far as in such a subject is possible, let us treat of the mind alone. The mind, then, when it loves itself, discloses two things—mind and love. But what is to love one's self, except to wish to help one's self to the enjoyment of self? And when any one wishes himself to be just as much as he is, then the will is on a par with the mind, and the love is equal to him who loves. And if love is a substance, it is certainly not body, but spirit; and the mind also is not body, but spirit. Yet love and mind are not two spirits, but one spirit; nor yet two essences, but one: and yet here

are two things that are one, he that loves and love; or, if you like so to put it, that which is loved and love. And these two, indeed, are mutually said relatively. Since he who loves is referred to love, and love to him who loves. For he who loves, loves with some love, and love is the love of some one who loves. But mind and spirit are not said relatively, but express essence. For mind and spirit do not exist because the mind and spirit of some particular man exists. For if we subtract the body from that which is man, which is so called with the conjunction of body, the mind and spirit remain. But if we subtract him that loves, then there is no love; and if we subtract love, then there is no one that loves. And therefore, in so far as they are mutually referred to one another, they are two; but whereas they are spoken in respect to themselves, each are spirit, and both together also are one spirit; and each are mind, and both together one mind. Where, then, is the trinity? Let us attend as much as we can, and let us invoke the everlasting light, that He may illuminate our darkness, and that we may see in ourselves, as much as we are permitted, the image of God.

### CHAPTER 3

THE IMAGE OF THE TRINITY IN THE MIND OF MAN WHO KNOWS HIMSELF AND LOVES HIMSELF. THE MIND KNOWS ITSELF THROUGH ITSELF

3. For the mind cannot love itself, except also it know itself; for how can it love what it does not know? Or if any body says that the mind, from either general or special knowledge, believes itself of such a character as it has by experience found others to be and therefore loves itself, he speaks most foolishly. For whence does a mind know another mind, if it does not know itself? For the mind does not know other minds and not know itself, as the eye of the body sees other eyes and does not see itself; for we see bodies through the eyes of the body, because, unless we are looking into a mirror, we cannot refract and reflect the rays into themselves which shine forth through those eyes, and touch whatever we discern,—a subject, indeed, which is treated of most subtly and obscurely, until it be clearly demonstrated whether the fact be so, or whether it be not. But whatever is the nature of the power by which we discern through the eyes, certainly, whether it be rays or anything else, we cannot discern with the eyes that power itself; but we inquire into it with the mind, and if possible,

understand even this with the mind. As the mind, then, itself gathers the knowledge of corporeal things through the senses of the body, so of incorporeal things through itself. Therefore it knows itself also through itself, since it is incorporeal; for if it does not know itself, it does not love itself.

#### CHAPTER 4

THE THREE ARE ONE, AND ALSO EQUAL, VIZ THE MIND ITSELF, AND THE LOVE, AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF IT. THAT THE SAME THREE EXIST SUBSTANTIALY, AND ARE PREDICATED RELATIVELY. THAT THE SAME THREE ARE INSEPARABLE. THAT THE SAME THREE ARE NOT JOINED AND COMMINGLED LIKE PARTS, BUT THAT THEY ARE OF ONE ESSENCE, AND ARE RELATIVES

4. But as there are two things (*duo quaedam*), the mind and the love of it, when it loves itself; so there are two things, the mind and the knowledge of it, when it knows itself. Therefore the mind itself, and the love of it, and the knowledge of it, are three things (*tria quaedam*), and these three are one; and when they are perfect they are equal. For if one loves himself less than as he is,—as for example, suppose that the mind of a man only loves itself as much as the body of a man ought to be loved, whereas the mind is more than the body,—then it is in fault, and its love is not perfect. Again, if it loves itself more than as it is,—as if, for instance, it loves itself as much as God is to be loved, whereas the mind is incomparably less than God,—here also it is exceedingly in fault, and its love of self is not perfect. But it is in fault more perversely and wrongly still, when it loves the body as much as God is to be loved. Also, if knowledge is less than that thing which is known, and which can be fully known, then knowledge is not perfect; but if it is greater, then the nature which knows is above that which is known, as the knowledge of the body is greater than the body itself, which is known by that knowledge. For knowledge is a kind of life in the reason of the knower, but the body is not life; and any life is greater than any body, not in bulk, but in power. But when the mind knows itself, its own knowledge does not rise above itself, because itself knows, and itself is known. When, therefore, it knows itself entirely, and no other thing with itself, then its knowledge is equal to itself; because its knowledge is not from another nature, since it knows itself. And when it perceives itself entirely, and nothing more, then it is neither less nor greater. We said therefore rightly,

that these three things, [mind, love, and knowledge], when they are perfect, are by consequence equal.

5. Similar reasoning suggests to us, if indeed we can any way understand the matter, that these things [i.e. love and knowledge] exist in the soul, and that, being as it were involved in it, they are so evolved from it as to be perceived and reckoned up substantially, or, so to say, essentially. Not as though in a subject; as color, or shape, or any other quality or quantity, are in the body. For anything of this [material] kind does not go beyond the subject in which it is; for the color or shape of this particular body cannot be also those of another body. But the mind can also love something besides itself, with that love with which it loves itself. And further, the mind does not know itself only, but also many other things. Wherefore love and knowledge are not contained in the mind as in a subject, but these also exist substantially, as the mind itself does; because, even if they are mutually predicated relatively, yet they exist each severally in their own substance. Nor are they so mutually predicated relatively as color and the colored subject are; so that color is in the colored subject, but has not any proper substance in itself, since colored body is a substance, but color is in a substance; but as two friends are also two men, which are substances, while they are said to be men not relatively, but friends relatively.

6. But, further, although one who loves or one who knows is a substance, and knowledge is a substance, and love is a substance, but he that loves and love, or, he that knows and knowledge, are spoken of relatively to each other, as are friends: yet mind or spirit are not relatives, as neither are men relatives: nevertheless he that loves and love, or he that knows and knowledge, cannot exist separately from each other, as men can that are friends. Although it would seem that friends, too, can be separated in body, not in mind, in as far as they are friends: nay, it can even happen that a friend may even also begin to hate a friend and on this account cease to be a friend while the other does not know it, and still loves him. But if the love with which the mind loves itself ceases to be, then the mind also will at the same time cease to love. Likewise, if the knowledge by which the mind knows itself ceases to be, then the mind will also at the same time cease to know itself. Just as the head of anything that has a head is certainly a head,

and they are predicated relatively to each other, although they are also substances: for both a head is a body, and so is that which has a head; and if there be no head, then neither will there be that which has a head. Only these things can be separated from each other by cutting off, those cannot.

7. And even if there are some bodies which cannot be wholly separated and divided, yet they would not be bodies unless they consisted of their own proper parts. A part then is predicated relatively to a whole, since every part is a part of some whole, and a whole is a whole by having all its parts. But since both part and whole are bodies, these things are not only predicated relatively, but exist also substantially. Perhaps, then, the mind is a whole, and the love with which it loves itself, and the knowledge with which it knows itself, are as it were its parts, of which two parts that whole consists. Or are there three equal parts which make up the one whole? But no part embraces the whole, of which it is a part; whereas, when the mind knows itself as a whole, that is, knows itself perfectly, then the knowledge of it extends through the whole of it; and when it loves itself perfectly, then it loves itself as a whole, and the love of it extends through the whole of it. Is it, then, as one drink is made from wine and water and honey, and each single part extends through the whole, and yet they are three things (for there is no part of the drink which does not contain these three things; for they are not joined as if they were water and oil, but are entirely commingled: and they are all substances, and the whole of that liquor which is composed of the three is one substance),—is it, I say, in some such way as this we are to think these three to be together, mind, love, and knowledge? But water, wine, and honey are not of one substance, although one substance results in the drink made from the commingling of them. And I cannot see how those other three are not of the same substance, since the mind itself loves itself, and itself knows itself; and these three so exist, as that the mind is neither loved nor known by any other thing at all. These three, therefore, must needs be of one and the same essence; and for that reason, if they were confounded together as it were by a commingling, they could not be in any way three, neither could they be mutually referred to each other. Just as if you were to make from one and the same gold three similar rings, although connected with each other, they are mutually referred to each other, because they are similar. For everything similar is



similar to something, and there is a trinity of rings, and one gold. But if they are blended with each other, and each mingled with the other through the whole of their own bulk, then that trinity will fall through, and it will not exist at all; and not only will it be called one gold, as it was called in the case of those three rings, but now it will not be called three things of gold at all.

## CHAPTER 5

THAT THESE THREE ARE SEVERAL IN THEMSELVES, AND MUTUALLY ALL IN ALL

8. But in these three, when the mind knows itself and loves itself, there remains a trinity: mind, love, knowledge; and this trinity is not confounded together by any commingling: although they are each severally in themselves and mutually all in all, or each severally in each two, or each two in each. Therefore all are in all. For certainly the mind is in itself, since it is called mind in respect to itself: although it is said to be knowing, or known, or knowable, relatively to its own knowledge; and although also as loving, and loved, or lovable, it is referred to love, by which it loves itself. And knowledge, although it is referred to the mind that knows or is known, nevertheless is also predicated both as known and knowing in respect to itself: for the knowledge by which the mind knows itself is not unknown to itself. And although love is referred to the mind that loves, whose love it is; nevertheless it is also love in respect to itself, so as to exist also in itself: since love too is loved, yet cannot be loved with anything except with love, that is with itself. So these things are severally in themselves. But so are they in each other; because both the mind that loves is in love, and love is in the knowledge of him that loves, and knowledge is in the mind that knows. And each severally is in like manner in each two, because the mind which knows and loves itself, is in its own love and knowledge: and the love of the mind that loves and knows itself, is in the mind and in its knowledge: and the knowledge of the mind that knows and loves itself is in the mind and in its love, because it loves itself that knows, and knows itself that loves. And hence also each two is in each severally, since the mind which knows and loves itself, is together with its own knowledge in love, and together with its own love in knowledge; and love too itself and knowledge are together in the mind, which loves and knows itself. But in what way all

are in all, we have already shown above; since the mind loves itself as a whole, and knows itself as a whole, and knows its own love wholly, and loves its own knowledge wholly, when these three things are perfect in respect to themselves. Therefore these three things are marvellously inseparable from each other, and yet each of them is severally a substance, and all together are one substance or essence, whilst they are mutually predicated relatively.

## CHAPTER 6

THERE IS ONE KNOWLEDGE OF THE THING IN THE THING ITSELF, AND ANOTHER IN ETERNAL TRUTH ITSELF. THAT CORPOREAL THINGS, TOO, ARE TO BE JUDGED THE RULES OF ETERNAL TRUTH

9. But when the human mind knows itself and loves itself, it does not know and love anything unchangeable: and each individual man declares his own particular mind by one manner of speech, when he considers what takes place in himself; but defines the human mind abstractly by special or general knowledge. And so, when he speaks to me of his own individual mind, as to whether he understands this or that, or does not understand it, or whether he wishes or does not wish this or that, I believe; but when he speaks the truth of the mind of man generally or specially, I recognize and approve. Whence it is manifest, that each sees a thing in himself, in such way that another person may believe what he says of it, yet may not see it; but another [sees a thing] in the truth itself, in such way that another person also can gaze upon it; of which the former undergoes changes at successive times, the latter consists in an unchangeable eternity. For we do not gather a generic or specific knowledge of the human mind by means of resemblance by seeing many minds with the eyes of the body: but we gaze upon indestructible truth, from which to define perfectly, as far as we can, not of what sort is the mind of any one particular man, but of what sort it ought to be upon the eternal plan.

10. Whence also, even in the case of the images of things corporeal which are drawn in through the bodily sense, and in some way infused into the memory, from which also those things which have not been seen are thought under a fancied image, whether otherwise than they really are, or even perchance as they are;—even here too, we are proved either to accept

or reject, within ourselves, by other rules which remain altogether unchangeable above our mind, when we approve or reject anything rightly. For both when I recall the walls of Carthage which I have seen, and imagine to myself the walls of Alexandria which I have not seen, and, in preferring this to that among forms which in both cases are imaginary, make that preference upon grounds of reason; the judgment of truth from above is still strong and clear, and rests firmly upon the utterly indestructible rules of its own right; and if it is covered as it were by cloudiness of corporeal images, yet is not wrapt up and confounded in them.

11. But it makes a difference, whether, under that or in that darkness, I am shut off as it were from the clear heaven; or whether (as usually happens on lofty mountains), enjoying the free air between both, I at once look up above to the calmest light, and down below upon the densest clouds. For whence is the ardor of brotherly love kindled in me, when I hear that some man has borne bitter torments for the excellence and steadfastness of faith? And if that man is shown to me with the finger, I am eager to join myself to him, to become acquainted with him, to bind him to myself in friendship. And accordingly, if opportunity offers, I draw near, I address him, I converse with him, I express my goodwill towards him in what words I can, and wish that in him too in turn should be brought to pass and expressed goodwill towards me; and I endeavor after a spiritual embrace in the way of belief, since I cannot search out so quickly and discern altogether his innermost heart. I love therefore the faithful and courageous man with a pure and genuine love. But if he were to confess to me in the course of conversation, or were through unguardedness to show in any way, that either he believes something unseemly of God, and desires also something carnal in Him, and that he bore these torments on behalf of such an error, or from the desire of money for which he hoped, or from empty greediness of human praise: immediately it follows that the love with which I was borne towards him, displeased, and as it were repelled, and taken away from an unworthy man, remains in that form, after which, believing him such as I did, I had loved him; unless perhaps I have come to love him to this end, that he may become such, while I have found him not to be such in fact. And in that man, too, nothing is changed: although it can be changed, so that he may become that which I had believed him to be already. But in my

mind there certainly is something changed, viz., the estimate I had formed of him, which was before of one sort, and now is of another: and the same love, at the bidding from above of unchangeable righteousness, is turned aside from the purpose of enjoying, to the purpose of taking counsel. But the form itself of unshaken and stable truth, wherein I should have enjoyed the fruition of the man, believing him to be good, and wherein likewise I take counsel that he may be good, sheds in an immoveable eternity the same light of incorruptible and most sound reason, both upon the sight of my mind, and upon that cloud of images, which I discern from above, when I think of the same man whom I had seen. Again, when I call back to my mind some arch, turned beautifully and symmetrically, which, let us say, I saw at Carthage; a certain reality that had been made known to the mind through the eyes, and transferred to the memory, causes the imaginary view. But I behold in my mind yet another thing, according to which that work of art pleases me; and whence also, if it displeased me, I should correct it. We judge therefore of those particular things according to that [form of eternal truth], and discern that form by the intuition of the rational mind. But those things themselves we either touch if present by the bodily sense, or if absent remember their images as fixed in our memory, or picture, in the way of likeness to them, such things as we ourselves also, if we wished and were able, would laboriously build up: figuring in the mind after one fashion the images of bodies, or seeing bodies through the body; but after another, grasping by simple intelligence what is above the eye of the mind, viz., the reasons and the unspeakably beautiful skill of such forms.

## CHAPTER 7

WE CONCEIVE AND BEGET THE WORD WITHIN, FROM THE THINGS WE HAVE BEHELD IN THE ETERNAL TRUTH. THE WORD, WHETHER OF THE CREATURE OR OF THE CREATOR, IS CONCEIVED BY LOVE

12. We behold, then, by the sight of the mind, in that eternal truth from which all things temporal are made, the form according to which we are, and according to which we do anything by true and right reason, either in ourselves, or in things corporeal; and we have the true knowledge of things, thence conceived, as it were as a word within us, and by speaking we beget it from within; nor by being born does it depart from us. And when we

speak to others, we apply to the word, remaining within us, the ministry of the voice or of some bodily sign, that by some kind of sensible remembrance some similar thing may be wrought also in the mind of him that hears,—similar, I say, to that which does not depart from the mind of him that speaks. We do nothing, therefore, through the members of the body in our words and actions, by which the behavior of men is either approved or blamed, which we do not anticipate by a word uttered within ourselves. For no one willingly does anything, which he has not first said in his heart.

13. And this word is conceived by love, either of the creature or of the Creator, that is, either of changeable nature or of unchangeable truth.

## CHAPTER 8

### IN WHAT DESIRE AND LOVE DIFFER

[Conceived] therefore, either by desire or by love: not that the creature ought not to be loved; but if that love [of the creature] is referred to the Creator, then it will not be desire (*cupiditas*), but love (*charitas*). For it is desire when the creature is loved for itself. And then it does not help a man through making use of it, but corrupts him in the enjoying it. When, therefore, the creature is either equal to us or inferior, we must use the inferior in order to God, but we must enjoy the equal duly in God. For as thou oughtest to enjoy thyself, not in thyself, but in Him who made thee, so also him whom thou lovest as thyself. Let us enjoy, therefore, both ourselves and our brethren in the Lord; and hence let us not dare to yield, and as it were to relax, ourselves to ourselves in the direction downwards. Now a word is born, when, being thought out, it pleases us either to the effect of sinning, or to that of doing right. Therefore love, as it were a mean, conjoins our word and the mind from which it is conceived, and without any confusion binds itself as a third with them, in an incorporeal embrace.

## CHAPTER 9

### IN THE LOVE OF SPIRITUAL THINGS THE WORD BORN IS THE SAME AS THE WORD CONCEIVED. IT IS OTHERWISE IN THE LOVE OF CARNAL THINGS

14. But the word conceived and the word born are the very same when the will finds rest in knowledge itself, as is the case in the love of spiritual things. For instance, he who knows righteousness perfectly, and loves it perfectly, is already righteous; even if no necessity exist of working according to it outwardly through the members of the body. But in the love of carnal and temporal things, as in the offspring of animals, the conception of the word is one thing, the bringing forth another. For here what is conceived by desiring is born by attaining. Since it does not suffice to avarice to know and to love gold, except it also have it; nor to know and love to eat, or to lie with any one, unless also one does it; nor to know and love honors and power, unless they actually come to pass. Nay, all these things, even if obtained, do not suffice. "Whosoever drinketh of this water," He says, "shall thirst again." And so also the Psalmist, "He hath conceived pain and brought forth iniquity." And he speaks of pain or labor as conceived, when those things are conceived which it is not sufficient to know and will, and when the mind burns and grows sick with want, until it arrives at those things, and, as it were, brings them forth. Whence in the Latin language we have the word "parta" used elegantly for both "reperta" and "comperta," which words sound as if derived from bringing forth. Since "lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin." Wherefore the Lord proclaims, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden;" and in another place "Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days!" And when therefore He referred all either right actions or sins to the bringing forth of the word, "By thy mouth," He says, "thou shalt be justified, and by thy mouth thou shalt be condemned," intending thereby not the visible mouth, but that which is within and invisible, of the thought and of the heart.

## CHAPTER 10

### WHETHER ONLY KNOWLEDGE THAT IS LOVED IS THE WORD OF THE MIND

15. It is rightly asked then, whether all knowledge is a word, or only knowledge that is loved. For we also know the things which we hate; but what we do not like, cannot be said to be either conceived or brought forth by the mind. For not all things which in anyway touch it, are conceived by it; but some only reach the point of being known, but yet are not spoken as

words, as for instance those of which we speak now. For those are called words in one way, which occupy spaces of time by their syllables, whether they are pronounced or only thought; and in another way, all that is known is called a word imprinted on the mind, as long as it can be brought forth from the memory and defined, even though we dislike the thing itself; and in another way still, when we like that which is conceived in the mind. And that which the apostle says, must be taken according to this last kind of word, “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;” since those also say this, but according to another meaning of the term “word,” of whom the Lord Himself says, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Nay, even in the case of things which we hate, when we rightly dislike and rightly censure them, we approve and like the censure bestowed upon them, and it becomes a word. Nor is it the knowledge of vices that displeases us, but the vices themselves. For I like to know and define what intemperance is; and this is its word. Just as there are known faults in art, and the knowledge of them is rightly approved, when a connoisseur discerns the species or the privation of excellence, as to affirm and deny that it is or that it is not; yet to be without excellence and to fall away into fault, is worthy of condemnation. And to define intemperance, and to say its word, belongs to the art of morals; but to be intemperate belongs to that which that art censures. Just as to know and define what a solecism is, belongs to the art of speaking; but to be guilty of one, is a fault which the same art reprehends. A word, then, which is the point we wish now to discern and intimate, is knowledge together with love. Whenever, then, the mind knows and loves itself, its word is joined to it by love. And since it loves knowledge and knows love, both the word is in love and love is in the word, and both are in him who loves and speaks.

## CHAPTER 11

THAT THE IMAGE OR BEGOTTEN WORD OF THE MIND THAT KNOWS ITSELF IS EQUAL TO THE MIND ITSELF

16. But all knowledge according to species is like the thing which it knows. For there is another knowledge according to privation, according to which we speak a word only when we condemn. And this condemnation of a privation is equivalent to praise of the species, and so is approved. The

mind, then, contains some likeness to a known species, whether when liking that species or when disliking its privation. And hence, in so far as we know God, we are like Him, but not like to the point of equality, since we do not know Him to the extent of His own being. And as, when we speak of bodies by means of the bodily sense, there arises in our mind some likeness of them, which is a phantasm of the memory; for the bodies themselves are not at all in the mind, when we think them, but only the likenesses of those bodies; therefore, when we approve the latter for the former, we err, for the approving of one thing for another is an error; yet the image of the body in the mind is a thing of a better sort than the species of the body itself, inasmuch as the former is in a better nature, viz. in a living substance, as the mind is: so when we know God, although we are made better than we were before we knew Him, and above all when the same knowledge being also liked and worthily loved becomes a word, and so that knowledge becomes a kind of likeness of God; yet that knowledge is of a lower kind, since it is in a lower nature; for the mind is creature, but God is Creator. And from this it may be inferred, that when the mind knows and approves itself, this same knowledge is in such way its word, as that it is altogether on a par and equal with it, and the same; because it is neither the knowledge of a lower essence, as of the body, nor of a higher, as of God. And whereas knowledge bears a likeness to that which it knows, that is, of which it is the knowledge; in this case it has perfect and equal likeness, when the mind itself, which knows, is known. And so it is both image and word; because it is uttered concerning that mind to which it is equalled in knowing, and that which is begotten is equal to the begetter.

## CHAPTER 12

WHY LOVE IS NOT THE OFFSPRING OF THE MIND, AS KNOWLEDGE IS SO. THE SOLUTION OF THE QUESTION. THE MIND WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF ITSELF AND THE LOVE OF ITSELF IS THE IMAGE OF THE TRINITY

17. What then is love? Will it not be an image? Will it not be a word? Will it not be begotten? For why does the mind beget its knowledge when it knows itself, and not beget its love when it loves itself? For if it is the cause of its own knowing, for the reason that it is knowable, it is also the cause of its own love because it is lovable. It is hard, then, to say why it does not



beget both. For there is a further question also respecting the supreme Trinity itself, the omnipotent God the Creator, after whose image man is made, which troubles men, whom the truth of God invites to the faith by human speech; viz. why the Holy Spirit is not also to be either believed or understood to be begotten by God the Father, so that He also may be called a Son. And this question we are endeavoring in some way to investigate in the human mind, in order that from a lower image, in which our own nature itself as it were answers, upon being questioned, in a way more familiar to ourselves, we may be able to direct a more practised mental vision from the enlightened creature to the unchangeable light; assuming, however, that the truth itself has persuaded us, that as no Christian doubts the Word of God to be the Son, so that the Holy Spirit is love. Let us return, then, to a more careful questioning and consideration upon this subject of that image which is the creature, that is, of the rational mind; wherein the knowledge of some things coming into existence in time, but which did not exist before, and the love of some things which were not loved before, opens to us more clearly what to say: because to speech also itself, which must be disposed in time, that thing is easier of explanation which is comprehended in the order of time.

18. First, therefore, it is clear that a thing may possibly be knowable, that is, such as can be known, and yet that it may be unknown; but that it is not possible for that to be known which is not knowable. Wherefore it must be clearly held that everything whatsoever that we know begets at the same time in us the knowledge of itself; for knowledge is brought forth from both, from the knower and from the thing known. When, therefore, the mind knows itself, it alone is the parent of its own knowledge; for it is itself both the thing known and the knower of it. But it was knowable to itself also before it knew itself, only the knowledge of itself was not in itself so long as it did not know itself. In knowing itself, then, it begets a knowledge of itself equal to itself; since it does not know itself as less than itself is, nor is its knowledge the knowledge of the essence of some one else, not only because itself knows, but also because it knows itself, as we have said above. What then is to be said of love; why, when the mind loves itself, it should not seem also to have begotten the love of itself? For it was lovable to itself even before it loved itself since it could love itself; just as it was

knowable to itself even before it knew itself, since it could know itself. For if it were not knowable to itself, it never could have known itself; and so, if it were not lovable to itself, it never could have loved itself. Why therefore may it not be said by loving itself to have begotten its own love, as by knowing itself it has begotten its own knowledge? Is it because it is thereby indeed plainly shown that this is the principle of love, whence it proceeds? for it proceeds from the mind itself, which is lovable to itself before it loves itself, and so is the principle of its own love by which it loves itself: but that this love is not therefore rightly said to be begotten by the mind, as is the knowledge of itself by which the mind knows itself, because in the case of knowledge the thing has been found already, which is what we call brought forth or discovered; and this is commonly preceded by an inquiry such as to find rest when that end is attained. For inquiry is the desire of finding, or, what is the same thing, of discovering. But those things which are discovered are as it were brought forth, whence they are like offspring; but wherein, except in the case itself of knowledge? For in that case they are as it were uttered and fashioned. For although the things existed already which we found by seeking, yet the knowledge of them did not exist, which knowledge we regard as an offspring that is born. Further, the desire (appetitus) which there is in seeking proceeds from him who seeks, and is in some way in suspense, and does not rest in the end whither it is directed, except that which is sought be found and conjoined with him who seeks. And this desire, that is, inquiry,—although it does not seem to be love, by which that which is known is loved, for in this case we are still striving to know,—yet it is something of the same kind. For it can be called will (voluntas), since every one who seeks wills (vult) to find; and if that is sought which belongs to knowledge, every one who seeks wills to know. But if he wills ardently and earnestly, he is said to study (studere): a word that is most commonly employed in the case of pursuing and obtaining any branches of learning. Therefore, the bringing forth of the mind is preceded by some desire, by which, through seeking and finding what we wish to know, the offspring, viz. knowledge itself, is born. And for this reason, that desire by which knowledge is conceived and brought forth, cannot rightly be called the bringing forth and the offspring; and the same desire which led us to long for the knowing of the thing, becomes the love of the thing when known, while it holds and embraces its accepted offspring, that is,

knowledge, and unites it to its begetter. And so there is a kind of image of the Trinity in the mind itself, and the knowledge of it, which is its offspring and its word concerning itself, and love as a third, and these three are one, and one substance. Neither is the offspring less, since the mind knows itself according to the measure of its own being; nor is the love less, since it loves itself according to the measure both of its own knowledge and of its own being.

# Book X

In which there is shown to be another trinity in the mind of man, and one that appears much more evidently, viz. in his memory, understanding, and will.

## CHAPTER 1

THE LOVE OF THE STUDIOUS MIND, THAT IS, OF ONE DESIROUS TO KNOW, IS NOT THE LOVE OF A THING WHICH IT DOES NOT KNOW

1. Let us now proceed, then, in due order, with a more exact purpose, to explain this same point more thoroughly. And first, since no one can love at all a thing of which he is wholly ignorant, we must carefully consider of what sort is the love of those who are studious, that is, of those who do not already know, but are still desiring to know any branch of learning. Now certainly, in those things whereof the word study is not commonly used, love often arises from hearsay, when the reputation of anything for beauty inflames the mind to the seeing and enjoying it; since the mind knows generically wherein consist the beauties of corporeal things, from having seen them very frequently, and since there exists within a faculty of approving that which outwardly is longed for. And when this happens, the love that is called forth is not of a thing wholly unknown, since its genus is thus known. But when we love a good man whose face we never saw, we love him from the knowledge of his virtues, which virtues we know [abstractly] in the truth itself. But in the case of learning, it is for the most part the authority of others who praise and commend it that kindles our love of it; although nevertheless we could not burn with any zeal at all for the study of it, unless we had already in our mind at least a slight impression of the knowledge of each kind of learning. For who, for instance, would devote any care and labor to the learning of rhetoric, unless he knew before that it was the science of speaking? Sometimes, again, we marvel at the

results of learning itself, which we have heard of or experienced; and hence burn to obtain, by learning, the power of attaining these results. Just as if it were said to one who did not know his letters, that there is a kind of learning which enables a man to send words, wrought with the hand in silence, to one who is ever so far absent, for him in turn to whom they are sent to gather these words, not with his ears, but with his eyes; and if the man were to see the thing actually done, is not that man, since he desires to know how he can do this thing, altogether moved to study with a view to the result which he already knows and holds? So it is that the studious zeal of those who learn is kindled: for that of which any one is utterly ignorant, he can in no way love.

2. So also, if any one hear an unknown sign, as, for instance, the sound of some word of which he does not know the signification, he desires to know what it is; that is, he desires to know what thing it is which it is agreed shall be brought to mind by that sound: as if he heard the word *temetum* uttered, and not knowing, should ask what it is. He must then know already that it is a sign, i.e. that the word is not an empty sound, but that something is signified by it; for in other respects this trisyllabic word is known to him already, and has already impressed its articulate form upon his mind through the sense of hearing. And then what more is to be required in him, that he may go on to a greater knowledge of that of which all the letters and all the spaces of its several sounds are already known, unless that it shall at the same time have become known to him that it is a sign, and shall have also moved him with the desire of knowing of what it is the sign? The more, then, the thing is known, yet not fully known, the more the mind desires to know concerning it what remains to be known. For if he knew it to be only such and such a spoken word, and did not know that it was the sign of something, he would seek nothing further, since the sensible thing is already perceived as far as it can be by the sense. But because he knows it to be not only a spoken word, but also a sign, he wishes to know it perfectly; and no sign is known perfectly, except it be known of what it is the sign. He then who with ardent carefulness seeks to know this, and inflamed by studious zeal perseveres in the search; can such an one be said to be without love? What then does he love? For certainly nothing can be loved unless it is known. For that man does not love those three syllables

which he knows already. But if he loves this in them, that he knows them to signify something, this is not the point now in question, for it is not this which he seeks to know. But we are now asking what it is he loves, in that which he is desirous to know, but which certainly he does not yet know; and we are therefore wondering why he loves, since we know most assuredly that nothing can be loved unless it be known. What then does he love, except that he knows and perceives in the reason of things what excellence there is in learning, in which the knowledge of all signs is contained; and what benefit there is in the being skilled in these, since by them human fellowship mutually communicates its own perceptions, lest the assemblies of men should be actually worse than utter solitude, if they were not to mingle their thoughts by conversing together? The soul, then, discerns this fitting and serviceable species, and knows it, and loves it; and he who seeks the meaning of any words of which he is ignorant, studies to render that species perfect in himself as much as he can: for it is one thing to behold it in the light of truth, another to desire it as within his own capacity. For he beholds in the light of truth how great and how good a thing it is to understand and to speak all tongues of all nations, and so to hear no tongue and to be heard by none as from a foreigner. The beauty, then, of this knowledge is already discerned by thought, and the thing being known is loved; and that thing is so regarded, and so stimulates the studious zeal of learners, that they are moved with respect to it, and desire it eagerly in all the labor which they spend upon the attainment of such a capacity, in order that they may also embrace in practice that which they know beforehand by reason. And so every one, the nearer he approaches that capacity in hope, the more fervently desires it with love; for those branches of learning are studied the more eagerly, which men do not despair of being able to attain; for when any one entertains no hope of attaining his end, then he either loves lukewarmly or does not love at all, howsoever he may see the excellence of it. Accordingly, because the knowledge of all languages is almost universally felt to be hopeless, every one studies most to know that of his own nation; but if he feels that he is not sufficient even to comprehend this perfectly, yet no one is so indolent in this knowledge as not to wish to know, when he hears an unknown word, what it is, and to seek and learn it if he can. And while he is seeking it, certainly he has a studious zeal of learning, and seems to love a thing he does not know; but

the case is really otherwise. For that species touches the mind, which the mind knows and thinks, wherein the fitness is clearly visible which accrues from the associating of minds with one another, in the hearing and returning of known and spoken words. And this species kindles studious zeal in him who seeks what indeed he knows not, but gazes upon and loves the unknown form to which that pertains. If then, for example, any one were to ask, What is temetum (for I had instanced this word already), and it were said to him, What does this matter to you? he will answer, Lest perhaps I hear some one speaking, and understand him not; or perhaps read the word somewhere, and know not what the writer meant. Who, pray, would say to such an inquirer, Do not care about understanding what you hear; do not care about knowing what you read? For almost every rational soul quickly discerns the beauty of that knowledge, through which the thoughts of men are mutually made known by the enunciation of significant words; and it is on account of this fitness thus known, and because known therefore loved, that such an unknown word is studiously sought out. When then he hears and learns that wine was called “temetum” by our forefathers, but that the word is already quite obsolete in our present usage of language, he will think perhaps that he has still need of the word on account of this or that book of those forefathers. But if he holds these also to be superfluous, perhaps he does now come to think the word not worth remembering, since he sees it has nothing to do with that species of learning which he knows with the mind, and gazes upon, and so loves.

3. Wherefore in all cases the love of a studious mind, that is, of one that wishes to know what it does not know, is not the love of that thing which it does not know, but of that which it knows; on account of which it wishes to know what it does not know. Or if it is so inquisitive as to be carried away, not for any other cause known to it, but by the mere love of knowing things unknown; then such an inquisitive person is, doubtless distinguishable from an ordinary student, yet does not, any more than he, love things he does not know; nay, on the contrary, he is more fitly said to hate things he knows not, of which he wishes that there should be none, in wishing to know everything. But lest any one should lay before us a more difficult question, by declaring that it is just as impossible for any one to hate what he does not know, as to love what he does not know, we will not withstand what is

true; but it must be understood that it is not the same thing to say he loves to know things unknown, as to say he loves things unknown. For it is possible that a man may love to know things unknown; but it is not possible that he should love things unknown. For the word to know is not placed there without meaning; since he who loves to know things unknown, does not love the unknown things themselves, but the knowing of them. And unless he knew what knowing means, no one could say confidently, either that he knew or that he did not know. For not only he who says I know, and says so truly, must needs know what knowing is; but he also who says, I do not know, and says so confidently and truly, and knows that he says so truly, certainly knows what knowing is; for he both distinguishes him who does not know from him who knows, when he looks into himself and says truly I do not know; and whereas he knows that he says this truly, whence should he know it, if he did not know what knowing is?

## CHAPTER 2

### NO ONE AT ALL LOVES THINGS UNKNOWN

4. No studious person, then, no inquisitive person, loves things he does not know, even while he is urgent with the most vehement desire to know what he does not know. For he either knows already generically what he loves, and longs to know it also in some individual or individuals, which perhaps are praised, but not yet known to him; and he pictures in his mind an imaginary form by which he may be stirred to love. And whence does he picture this, except from those things which he has already known? And yet perhaps he will not love it, if he find that form which was praised to be unlike that other form which was figured and in thought most fully known to his mind. And if he has loved it, he will begin to love it from that time when he learned it; since a little before, that form which was loved was other than that which the mind that formed it had been wont to exhibit to itself. But if he shall find it similar to that form which report had proclaimed, and to be such that he could truly say I was already loving thee; yet certainly not even then did he love a form he did not know, since he had known it in that likeness. Or else we see somewhat in the species of the eternal reason, and therein love it; and when this is manifested in some image of a temporal thing, and we believe the praises of those who have



made trial of it, and so love it, then we do not love anything unknown, according to that which we have already sufficiently discussed above. Or else, again, we love something known, and on account of it seek something unknown; and so it is by no means the love of the thing unknown that possesses us, but the love of the thing known, to which we know the unknown thing belongs, so that we know that too which we seek still as unknown; as a little before I said of an unknown word. Or else, again, every one loves the very knowing itself, as no one can fail to know who desires to know anything. For these reasons they seem to love things unknown who wish to know anything which they do not know, and who, on account of their vehement desire of inquiry, cannot be said to be without love. But how different the case really is, and that nothing at all can be loved which is not known, I think I must have persuaded every one who carefully looks upon truth. But since the examples which we have given belong to those who desire to know something which they themselves are not, we must take thought lest perchance some new notion appear, when the mind desires to know itself.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THAT WHEN THE MIND LOVES ITSELF, IT IS NOT UNKNOWN TO ITSELF

5. What, then, does the mind love, when it seeks ardently to know itself, whilst it is still unknown to itself? For, behold, the mind seeks to know itself, and is excited thereto by studious zeal. It loves, therefore; but what does it love? Is it itself? But how can this be when it does not yet know itself, and no one can love what he does not know? Is it that report has declared to it its own species, in like way as we commonly hear of people who are absent? Perhaps, then, it does not love itself, but loves that which it imagines of itself, which is perhaps widely different from what itself is: or if the phantasy in the mind is like the mind itself, and so when it loves this fancied image, it loves itself before it knew itself, because it gazes upon that which is like itself; then it knew other minds from which to picture itself, and so is known to itself generically. Why, then, when it knows other minds, does it not know itself, since nothing can possibly be more present to it than itself? But if, as other eyes are more known to the eyes of the body, than those eyes are to themselves; then let it not seek itself, because it

never will find itself. For eyes can never see themselves except in looking-glasses; and it cannot be supposed in any way that anything of that kind can be applied also to the contemplation of incorporeal things, so that the mind should know itself, as it were, in a looking-glass. Or does it see in the reason of eternal truth how beautiful it is to know one's self, and so loves this which it sees, and studies to bring it to pass in itself? because, although it is not known to itself, yet it is known to it how good it is, that it should be known to itself. And this, indeed, is very wonderful, that it does not yet know itself, and yet knows already how excellent a thing it is to know itself. Or does it see some most excellent end, viz. its own serenity and blessedness, by some hidden remembrance, which has not abandoned it, although it has gone far onwards, and believes that it cannot attain to that same end unless it know itself? And so while it loves that, it seeks this; and loves that which is known, on account of which it seeks that which is unknown. But why should the remembrance of its own blessedness be able to last, and the remembrance of itself not be able to last as well; that so it should know itself which wishes to attain, as well as know that to which it wishes to attain? Or when it loves to know itself, does it love, not itself, which it does not yet know, but the very act of knowing; and feel the more annoyed that itself is wanting to its own knowledge wherewith it wishes to embrace all things? And it knows what it is to know; and whilst it loves this, which it knows, desires also to know itself. Whereby, then, does it know its own knowing, if it does not know itself? For it knows that it knows other things, but that it does not know itself; for it is from hence that it knows also what knowing is. In what way, then, does that which does not know itself, know itself as knowing anything? For it does not know that some other mind knows, but that itself does so. Therefore it knows itself. Further, when it seeks to know itself, it knows itself now as seeking. Therefore again it knows itself. And hence it cannot altogether not know itself, when certainly it does so far know itself as that it knows itself as not knowing itself. But if it does not know itself not to know itself, then it does not seek to know itself. And therefore, in the very fact that it seeks itself, it is clearly convicted of being more known to itself than unknown. For it knows itself as seeking and as not knowing itself, in that it seeks to know itself.

## CHAPTER 4

### HOW THE MIND KNOWS ITSELF, NOT IN PART, BUT AS A WHOLE

6. What then shall we say? Does that which knows itself in part, not know itself in part? But it is absurd to say, that it does not as a whole know what it knows. I do not say, it knows wholly; but what it knows, it as a whole knows. When therefore it knows anything about itself, which it can only know as a whole, it knows itself as a whole. But it does know that itself knows something, while yet except as a whole it cannot know anything. Therefore it knows itself as a whole. Further, what in it is so known to itself, as that it lives? And it cannot at once be a mind, and not live, while it has also something over and above, viz., that it understands: for the souls of beasts also live, but do not understand. As therefore a mind is a whole mind, so it lives as a whole. But it knows that it lives. Therefore it knows itself as a whole. Lastly, when the mind seeks to know itself, it already knows that it is a mind: otherwise it knows not whether it seeks itself, and perhaps seeks one thing while intending to seek another. For it might happen that itself was not a mind, and so, in seeking to know a mind, that it did not seek to know itself. Wherefore since the mind, when it seeks to know what mind is, knows that it seeks itself, certainly it knows that itself is a mind. Furthermore, if it knows this in itself, that it is a mind, and a whole mind, then it knows itself as a whole. But suppose it did not know itself to be a mind, but in seeking itself only knew that it did seek itself. For so, too, it may possibly seek one thing for another, if it does not know this: but that it may not seek one thing for another, without doubt it knows what it seeks. But if it knows what it seeks, and seeks itself, then certainly it knows itself. What therefore more does it seek? But if it knows itself in part, but still seeks itself in part, then it seeks not itself, but part of itself. For when we speak of the mind itself, we speak of it as a whole. Further, because it knows that it is not yet found by itself as a whole, it knows how much the whole is. And so it seeks that which is wanting, as we are wont to seek to recall to the mind something that has slipped from the mind, but has not altogether gone away from it; since we can recognize it, when it has come back, to be the same thing that we were seeking. But how can mind come into mind, as though it were possible for the mind not to be in the mind? Add to this, that if, having found a part, it does not seek itself as a

whole, yet it as a whole seeks itself. Therefore as a whole it is present to itself, and there is nothing left to be sought: for that is wanting which is sought, not the mind which seeks. Since therefore it as a whole seeks itself, nothing of it is wanting. Or if it does not as a whole seek itself, but the part which has been found seeks the part which has not yet been found then the mind does not seek itself, of which no part seeks itself. For the part which has been found, does not seek itself; nor yet does the part itself which has not yet been found, seek itself; since it is sought by that part which has been already found. Wherefore, since neither the mind as a whole seeks itself, nor does any part of it seek itself, the mind does not seek itself at all.

## CHAPTER 5

WHY THE SOUL IS ENJOINED TO KNOW ITSELF. WHENCE COME THE ERRORS OF THE MIND CONCERNING ITS OWN SUBSTANCE

7. Why therefore is it enjoined upon it, that it should know itself? I suppose, in order that, it may consider itself, and live according to its own nature; that is, seek to be regulated according to its own nature, viz., under Him to whom it ought to be subject, and above those things to which it is to be preferred; under Him by whom it ought to be ruled, above those things which it ought to rule. For it does many things through vicious desire, as though in forgetfulness of itself. For it sees some things intrinsically excellent, in that more excellent nature which is God: and whereas it ought to remain steadfast that it may enjoy them, it is turned away from Him, by wishing to appropriate those things to itself, and not to be like to Him by His gift, but to be what He is by its own, and it begins to move and slip gradually down into less and less, which it thinks to be more and more; for it is neither sufficient for itself, nor is anything at all sufficient for it, if it withdraw from Him who is alone sufficient: and so through want and distress it becomes too intent upon its own actions and upon the unquiet delights which it obtains through them: and thus, by the desire of acquiring knowledge from those things that are without, the nature of which it knows and loves, and which it feels can be lost unless held fast with anxious care, it loses its security, and thinks of itself so much the less, in proportion as it feels the more secure that it cannot lose itself. So, whereas it is one thing not to know oneself, and another not to think of oneself (for we do not say

of the man that is skilled in much learning, that he is ignorant of grammar, when he is only not thinking of it, because he is thinking at the time of the art of medicine);—whereas, then, I say it is one thing not to know oneself, and another not to think of oneself, such is the strength of love, that the mind draws in with itself those things which it has long thought of with love, and has grown into them by the close adherence of diligent study, even when it returns in some way to think of itself. And because these things are corporeal which it loved externally through the carnal senses; and because it has become entangled with them by a kind of daily familiarity, and yet cannot carry those corporeal things themselves with itself internally as it were into the region of incorporeal nature; therefore it combines certain images of them, and thrusts them thus made from itself into itself. For it gives to the forming of them somewhat of its own substance, yet preserves the while something by which it may judge freely of the species of those images; and this something is more properly the mind, that is, the rational understanding, which is preserved that it may judge. For we see that we have those parts of the soul which are informed by the likenesses of corporeal things, in common also with beasts.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE OPINION WHICH THE MIND HAS OF ITSELF IS DECEITFUL

8. But the mind errs, when it so lovingly and intimately connects itself with these images, as even to consider itself to be something of the same kind. For so it is conformed to them to some extent, not by being this, but by thinking it is so: not that it thinks itself to be an image, but outright that very thing itself of which it entertains the image. For there still lives in it the power of distinguishing the corporeal thing which it leaves without, from the image of that corporeal thing which it contains therefrom within itself: except when these images are so projected as if felt without and not thought within, as in the case of people who are asleep, or mad, or in a trance.

## CHAPTER 7

THE OPINIONS OF PHILOSOPHERS RESPECTING THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SOUL. THE ERROR OF THOSE WHO ARE OF OPINION THAT THE SOUL IS CORPOREAL, DOES NOT ARISE FROM DEFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL, BUT FROM THEIR ADDING THERE TO SOMETHING FOREIGN TO IT. WHAT IS MEANT BY FINDING

9. When, therefore, it thinks itself to be something of this kind, it thinks itself to be a corporeal thing; and since it is perfectly conscious of its own superiority, by which it rules the body, it has hence come to pass that the question has been raised what part of the body has the greater power in the body; and the opinion has been held that this is the mind, nay, that it is even the whole soul altogether. And some accordingly think it to be the blood, others the brain, others the heart; not as the Scripture says, “I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart;” and, “Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thine heart;” for this word by misapplication or metaphor is transferred from the body to the soul; but they have simply thought it to be that small part itself of the body, which we see when the inward parts are rent asunder. Others, again, have believed the soul to be made up of very minute and individual corpustules, which they call atoms, meeting in themselves and cohering. Others have said that its substance is air, others fire. Others have been of opinion that it is no substance at all, since they could not think any substance unless it is body, and they did not find that the soul was body; but it was in their opinion the tempering together itself of our body, or the combining together of the elements, by which that flesh is as it were conjoined. And hence all of these have held the soul to be mortal; since, whether it were body, or some combination of body, certainly it could not in either case continue always without death. But they who have held its substance to be some kind of life the reverse of corporeal, since they have found it to be a life that animates and quickens every living body, have by consequence striven also, according as each was able, to prove it immortal, since life cannot be without life.

For as to that fifth kind of body, I know not what, which some have added to the four well-known elements of the world, and have said that the soul was made of this, I do not think we need spend time in discussing it in this place. For either they mean by body what we mean by it, viz., that of which a part is less than the whole in extension of place, and they are to be

reckoned among those who have believed the mind to be corporeal: or if they call either all substance, or all changeable substance, body, whereas they know that not all substance is contained in extension of place by any length and breadth and height, we need not contend with them about a question of words.

10. Now, in the case of all these opinions, any one who sees that the nature of the mind is at once substance, and yet not corporeal,—that is, that it does not occupy a less extension of place with a less part of itself, and a greater with a greater,—must needs see at the same time that they who are of opinion that it is corporeal do not err from defect of knowledge concerning mind, but because they associate with it qualities without which they are not able to conceive any nature at all. For if you bid them conceive of existence that is without corporeal phantasms, they hold it merely nothing. And so the mind would not seek itself, as though wanting to itself. For what is so present to knowledge as that which is present to the mind? Or what is so present to the mind as the mind itself? And hence what is called “invention,” if we consider the origin of the word, what else does it mean, unless that to find out is to “come into” that which is sought? Those things accordingly which come into the mind as it were of themselves, are not usually said to be found out, although they may be said to be known; since we did not endeavor by seeking to come into them, that is to invent or find them out. And therefore, as the mind itself really seeks those things which are sought by the eyes or by any other sense of the body (for the mind directs even the carnal sense, and then finds out or invents, when that sense comes to the things which are sought); so, too, it finds out or invents other things which it ought to know, not with the medium of corporeal sense, but through itself, when it “comes into” them; and this, whether in the case of the higher substance that is in God, or of the other parts of the soul; just as it does when it judges of bodily images themselves, for it finds these within, in the soul, impressed through the body.

## CHAPTER 8

HOW THE SOUL INQUIRES INTO ITSELF. WHENCE COMES THE ERROR OF THE SOUL CONCERNING ITSELF

11. It is then a wonderful question, in what manner the soul seeks and finds itself; at what it aims in order to seek, or whither it comes, that it may come into or find out. For what is so much in the mind as the mind itself? But because it is in those things which it thinks of with love, and is wont to be in sensible, that is, in corporeal things with love, it is unable to be in itself without the images of those corporeal things. And hence shameful error arises to block its way, whilst it cannot separate from itself the images of sensible things, so as to see itself alone. For they have marvellously cohered with it by the close adhesion of love. And herein consists its uncleanness; since, while it strives to think of itself alone, it fancies itself to be that, without which it cannot think of itself. When, therefore, it is bidden to become acquainted with itself, let it not seek itself as though it were withdrawn from itself; but let it withdraw that which it has added to itself. For itself lies more deeply within, not only than those sensible things, which are clearly without, but also than the images of them; which are indeed in some part of the soul, viz., that which beasts also have, although these want understanding, which is proper to the mind. As therefore the mind is within, it goes forth in some sort from itself, when it exerts the affection of love towards these, as it were, footprints of many acts of attention. And these footprints are, as it were, imprinted on the memory, at the time when the corporeal things which are without are perceived in such way, that even when those corporeal things are absent, yet the images of them are at hand to those who think of them. Therefore let the mind become acquainted with itself, and not seek itself as if it were absent; but fix upon itself the act of [voluntary] attention, by which it was wandering among other things, and let it think of itself. So it will see that at no time did it ever not love itself, at no time did it ever not know itself; but by loving another thing together with itself it has confounded itself with it, and in some sense has grown one with it. And so, while it embraces diverse things, as though they were one, it has come to think those things to be one which are diverse.

## CHAPTER 9

THE MIND KNOWS ITSELF, BY THE VERY ACT OF UNDERSTANDING THE PRECEPT TO KNOW ITSELF



12. Let it not therefore seek to discern itself as though absent, but take pains to discern itself as present. Nor let it take knowledge of itself as if it did not know itself, but let it distinguish itself from that which it knows to be another. For how will it take pains to obey that very precept which is given it, “Know thyself,” if it knows not either what “know” means or what “thyself” means? But if it knows both, then it knows also itself. Since “know thyself” is not so said to the mind as is “Know the cherubim and the seraphim;” for they are absent, and we believe concerning them, and according to that belief they are declared to be certain celestial powers. Nor yet again as it is said, Know the will of that man: for this it is not within our reach to perceive at all, either by sense or understanding, unless by corporeal signs actually set forth; and this in such a way that we rather believe than understand. Nor again as it is said to a man, Behold thy own face; which he can only do in a looking-glass. For even our own face itself is out of the reach of our own seeing it; because it is not there where our look can be directed. But when it is said to the mind, Know thyself; then it knows itself by that very act by which it understands the word “thyself;” and this for no other reason than that it is present to itself. But if it does not understand what is said, then certainly it does not do as it is bid to do. And therefore it is bidden to do that thing which it does do, when it understands the very precept that bids it.

## CHAPTER 10

EVERY MIND KNOWS CERTAINLY THREE THINGS CONCERNING ITSELF—THAT IT UNDERSTANDS, THAT IT IS, AND THAT IT LIVES

13. Let it not then add anything to that which it knows itself to be, when it is bidden to know itself. For it knows, at any rate, that this is said to itself; namely, to the self that is, and that lives, and that understands. But a dead body also is, and cattle live; but neither a dead body nor cattle understand. Therefore it so knows that it so is, and that it so lives, as an understanding is and lives. When, therefore, for example’s sake, the mind thinks itself air, it thinks that air understands; it knows, however, that itself understands, but it does not know itself to be air, but only thinks so. Let it separate that which it thinks itself; let it discern that which it knows; let this remain to it, about which not even have they doubted who have thought the mind to be this

corporeal thing or that. For certainly every mind does not consider itself to be air; but some think themselves fire, others the brain, and some one kind of corporeal thing, others another, as I have mentioned before; yet all know that they themselves understand, and are, and live; but they refer understanding to that which they understand, but to be, and to live, to themselves. And no one doubts, either that no one understands who does not live, or that no one lives of whom it is not true that he is; and that therefore by consequence that which understands both is and lives; not as a dead body is which does not live, nor as a soul lives which does not understand, but in some proper and more excellent manner. Further, they know that they will, and they equally know that no one can will who is not and who does not live; and they also refer that will itself to something which they will with that will. They know also that they remember; and they know at the same time that nobody could remember, unless he both was and lived; but we refer memory itself also to something, in that we remember those things. Therefore the knowledge and science of many things are contained in two of these three, memory and understanding; but will must be present, that we may enjoy or use them. For we enjoy things known, in which things themselves the will finds delight for their own sake, and so reposes; but we use those things, which we refer to some other thing which we are to enjoy. Neither is the life of man vicious and culpable in any other way, than as wrongly using and wrongly enjoying. But it is no place here to discuss this.

14. But since we treat of the nature of the mind, let us remove from our consideration all knowledge which is received from without, through the senses of the body; and attend more carefully to the position which we have laid down, that all minds know and are certain concerning themselves. For men certainly have doubted whether the power of living, of remembering, of understanding, of willing, of thinking, of knowing, of judging, be of air, or of fire, or of the brain, or of the blood, or of atoms, or besides the usual four elements of a fifth kind of body, I know not what; or whether the combining or tempering together of this our flesh itself has power to accomplish these things. And one has attempted to establish this, and another to establish that. Yet who ever doubts that he himself lives, and remembers, and understands, and wills, and thinks, and knows, and judges?

Seeing that even if he doubts, he lives; if he doubts, he remembers why he doubts; if he doubts, he understands that he doubts; if he doubts, he wishes to be certain; if he doubts, he thinks; if he doubts, he knows that he does not know; if he doubts, he judges that he ought not to assent rashly. Whosoever therefore doubts about anything else, ought not to doubt of all these things; which if they were not, he would not be able to doubt of anything.

15. They who think the mind to be either a body or the combination or tempering of the body, will have all these things to seem to be in a subject, so that the substance is air, or fire, or some other corporeal thing, which they think to be the mind; but that the understanding (*intelligentia*) is in this corporeal thing as its quality, so that this corporeal thing is the subject, but the understanding is in the subject: viz. that the mind is the subject, which they judge to be a corporeal thing, but the understanding [*intelligence*], or any other of those things which we have mentioned as certain to us, is in that subject. They also hold nearly the same opinion who deny the mind itself to be body, but think it to be the combination or tempering together of the body; for there is this difference, that the former say that the mind itself is the substance, in which the understanding [*intelligence*] is, as in a subject; but the latter say that the mind itself is in a subject, viz. in the body, of which it is the combination or tempering together. And hence, by consequence, what else can they think, except that the understanding also is in the same body as in a subject?

16. And all these do not perceive that the mind knows itself, even when it seeks for itself, as we have already shown. But nothing is at all rightly said to be known while its substance is not known. And therefore, when the mind knows itself, it knows its own substance; and when it is certain about itself, it is as certain about its own substance. But it is certain about itself, as those things which are said above prove convincingly; although it is not at all certain whether itself is air, or fire, or some body, or some function of body. Therefore it is not any of these. And to that whole which is bidden to know itself, belongs this, that it is certain that it is not any of those things of which it is uncertain, and is certain that it is that only, which only it is certain that it is. For it thinks in this way of fire, or air, and whatever else of the body it thinks of. Neither can it in any way be brought to pass that it

should so think that which itself is, as it thinks that which itself is not. Since it thinks all these things through an imaginary phantasy, whether fire, or air, or this or that body, or that part or combination and tempering together of the body: nor assuredly is it said to be all those things, but some one of them. But if it were any one of them, it would think this one in a different manner from the rest viz. not through an imaginary phantasy, as absent things are thought, which either themselves or some of like kind have been touched by the bodily sense; but by some inward, not feigned, but true presence (for nothing is more present to it than itself); just as it thinks that itself lives, and remembers, and understands, and wills. For it knows these things in itself, and does not imagine them as though it had touched them by the sense outside itself, as corporeal things are touched. And if it attaches nothing to itself from the thought of these things, so as to think itself to be something of the kind, then whatsoever remains to it from itself that alone is itself.

## CHAPTER 11

IN MEMORY, UNDERSTANDING [OR INTELLIGENCE], AND WILL, WE HAVE TO NOTE ABILITY, LEARNING, AND USE. MEMORY, UNDERSTANDING, AND WILL ARE ONE ESSENTIALLY, AND THREE RELATIVELY

17. Putting aside, then, for a little while all other things, of which the mind is certain concerning itself, let us especially consider and discuss these three—memory, understanding, will. For we may commonly discern in these three the character of the abilities of the young also; since the more tenaciously and easily a boy remembers, and the more acutely he understands, and the more ardently he studies, the more praiseworthy is he in point of ability. But when the question is about any one's learning, then we ask not how solidly and easily he remembers, or how shrewdly he understands; but what it is that he remembers, and what it is that he understands. And because the mind is regarded as praiseworthy, not only as being learned, but also as being good, one gives heed not only to what he remembers and what he understands, but also to what he wills (*velit*); not how ardently he wills, but first what it is he wills, and then how greatly he wills it. For the mind that loves eagerly is then to be praised, when it loves that which ought to be loved eagerly. Since, then, we speak of these three—

ability, knowledge, use—the first of these is to be considered under the three heads, of what a man can do in memory, and understanding, and will. The second of them is to be considered in regard to that which any one has in his memory and in his understanding, which he has attained by a studious will. But the third, viz. use, lies in the will, which handles those things that are contained in the memory and understanding, whether it refer them to anything further, or rest satisfied with them as an end. For to use, is to take up something into the power of the will; and to enjoy, is to use with joy, not any longer of hope, but of the actual thing. Accordingly, every one who enjoys, uses; for he takes up something into the power of the will, wherein he also is satisfied as with an end. But not every one who uses, enjoys, if he has sought after that, which he takes up into the power of the will, not on account of the thing itself, but on account of something else.

18. Since, then, these three, memory, understanding, will, are not three lives, but one life; nor three minds, but one mind; it follows certainly that neither are they three substances, but one substance. Since memory, which is called life, and mind, and substance, is so called in respect to itself; but it is called memory, relatively to something. And I should say the same also of understanding and of will, since they are called understanding and will relatively to something; but each in respect to itself is life, and mind, and essence. And hence these three are one, in that they are one life, one mind, one essence; and whatever else they are severally called in respect to themselves, they are called also together, not plurally, but in the singular number. But they are three, in that wherein they are mutually referred to each other; and if they were not equal, and this not only each to each, but also each to all, they certainly could not mutually contain each other; for not only is each contained by each, but also all by each. For I remember that I have memory and understanding, and will; and I understand that I understand, and will, and remember; and I will that I will, and remember, and understand; and I remember together my whole memory, and understanding, and will. For that of my memory which I do not remember, is not in my memory; and nothing is so much in the memory as memory itself. Therefore I remember the whole memory. Also, whatever I understand I know that I understand, and I know that I will whatever I will; but whatever I know I remember. Therefore I remember the whole of my

understanding, and the whole of my will. Likewise, when I understand these three things, I understand them together as whole. For there is none of things intelligible which I do not understand, except what I do not know; but what I do not know, I neither remember, nor will. Therefore, whatever of things intelligible I do not understand, it follows also that I neither remember nor will. And whatever of things intelligible I remember and will, it follows that I understand. My will also embraces my whole understanding and my whole memory whilst I use the whole that I understand and remember. And, therefore, while all are mutually comprehended by each, and as wholes, each as a whole is equal to each as a whole, and each as a whole at the same time to all as wholes; and these three are one, one life, one mind, one essence.

## CHAPTER 12

### THE MIND IS AN IMAGE OF THE TRINITY IN ITS OWN MEMORY, AND UNDERSTANDING, AND WILL

19. Are we, then, now to go upward, with whatever strength of purpose we may, to that chiefest and highest essence, of which the human mind is an inadequate image, yet an image? Or are these same three things to be yet more distinctly made plain in the soul, by means of those things which we receive from without, through the bodily sense, wherein the knowledge of corporeal things is impressed upon us in time? Since we found the mind itself to be such in its own memory, and understanding, and will, that since it was understood always to know and always to will itself, it was understood also at the same time always to remember itself, always to understand and love itself, although not always to think of itself as separate from those things which are not itself; and hence its memory of itself, and understanding of itself, are with difficult discerned in it. For in this case, where these two things are very closely conjoined, and one is not preceded by the other by any time at all, it looks as if they were not two things, but one called by two names; and love itself is not so plainly felt to exist when the sense of need does not disclose it, since what is loved is always at hand. And hence these things may be more lucidly set forth, even to men of duller minds, if such topics are treated of as are brought within reach of the mind in time, and happen to it in time; while it remembers what it did not

remember before, and sees what it did not see before, and loves what it did not love before. But this discussion demands now another beginning, by reason of the measure of the present book.

# Book XI

A kind of image of the Trinity is pointed out, even in the outer man; first of all, in those things which are perceived from without, viz. in the bodily object that is seen, and in the form that is impressed by it upon the sight of the seer, and in the purpose of the will that combines the two; although these three are neither mutually equal, nor of one substance. Next, a kind of trinity, in three somewhats of one substance, is observed to exist in the mind itself, as it were introduced there from those things that are perceived from without; viz. the image of the bodily object which is in the memory, and the impression formed therefrom when the mind's eye of the thinker is turned to it, and the purpose of the will combining both. And this latter trinity is also said to pertain to the outer man, in that it is introduced into the mind from bodily objects, which are perceived from without.

## CHAPTER 1

### A TRACE OF THE TRINITY ALSO IN THE OUTER MAN

1. No one doubts that, as the inner man is endued with understanding, so is the outer with bodily sense. Let us try, then, if we can, to discover in this outer man also, some trace, however slight, of the Trinity, not that itself also is in the same manner the image of God. For the opinion of the apostle is evident, which declares the inner man to be renewed in the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him: whereas he says also in another place, "But though our outer man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Let us seek, then, so far as we can, in that which perishes, some image of the Trinity, if not so express, yet perhaps more easy to be discerned. For that outer man also is not called man to no purpose, but because there is in it some likeness of the inner man. And owing to that very order of our condition whereby we are made mortal and fleshly, we handle things visible more easily and more familiarly than things



intelligible; since the former are outward, the latter inward; and the former are perceived by the bodily sense, the latter are understood by the mind; and we ourselves, i.e. our minds, are not sensible things, that is, bodies, but intelligible things, since we are life. And yet, as I said, we are so familiarly occupied with bodies, and our thought has projected itself outwardly with so wonderful a proclivity towards bodies, that, when it has been withdrawn from the uncertainty of things corporeal, that it may be fixed with a much more certain and stable knowledge in that which is spirit, it flies back to those bodies, and seeks rest there whence it has drawn weakness. And to this its feebleness we must suit our argument; so that, if we would endeavor at any time to distinguish more aptly, and intimate more readily, the inward spiritual thing, we must take examples of likenesses from outward things pertaining to the body. The outer man, then, endued as he is with the bodily sense, is conversant with bodies. And this bodily sense, as is easily observed, is fivefold; seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching. But it is both a good deal of trouble, and is not necessary, that we should inquire of all these five senses about that which we seek. For that which one of them declares to us, holds also good in the rest. Let us use, then, principally the testimony of the eyes. For this bodily sense far surpasses the rest; and in proportion to its difference of kind, is nearer to the sight of the mind.

## CHAPTER 2

A CERTAIN TRINITY IN THE SIGHT. THAT THERE ARE THREE THINGS IN SIGHT, WHICH DIFFER IN THEIR OWN NATURE. IN WHAT MANNER FROM A VISIBLE THING VISION IS PRODUCED, OR THE IMAGE OF THAT THING WHICH IS SEEN. THE MATTER IS SHOWN MORE CLEARLY BY AN EXAMPLE. HOW THESE THREE COMBINE IN ONE

2. When, then, we see any corporeal object, these three things, as is most easy to do, are to be considered and distinguished: First, the object itself which we see; whether a stone, or flame, or any other thing that can be seen by the eyes; and this certainly might exist also already before it was seen; next, vision or the act of seeing, which did not exist before we perceived the object itself which is presented to the sense; in the third place, that which keeps the sense of the eye in the object seen, so long as it is seen, viz. the attention of the mind. In these three, then, not only is there an evident distinction, but also a diverse nature. For, first, that visible body is of a far

different nature from the sense of the eyes, through the incidence of which sense upon it vision arises. And what plainly is vision itself other than perception informed by that thing which is perceived? Although there is no vision if the visible object be withdrawn, nor could there be any vision of the kind at all if there were no body that could be seen; yet the body by which the sense of the eyes is informed, when that body is seen, and the form itself which is imprinted by it upon the sense, which is called vision, are by no means of the same substance. For the body that is seen is, in its own nature, separable; but the sense, which was already in the living subject, even before it saw what it was able to see, when it fell in with something visible,—or the vision which comes to be in the sense from the visible body when now brought into connection with it and seen,—the sense, then, I say, or the vision, that is, the sense informed from without, belongs to the nature of the living subject, which is altogether other than that body which we perceive by seeing, and by which the sense is not so formed as to be sense, but as to be vision. For unless the sense were also in us before the presentation to us of the sensible object, we should not differ from the blind, at times when we are seeing nothing, whether in darkness, or when our eyes are closed. But we differ from them in this, that there is in us, even when we are not seeing, that whereby we are able to see, which is called the sense; whereas this is not in them, nor are they called blind for any other reason than because they have it not. Further also, that attention of the mind which keeps the sense in that thing which we see, and connects both, not only differs from that visible thing in its nature; in that the one is mind, and the other body; but also from the sense and the vision itself: since this attention is the act of the mind alone; but the sense of the eyes is called a bodily sense, for no other reason than because the eyes themselves also are members of the body; and although an inanimate body does not perceive, yet the soul commingled with the body perceives through a corporeal instrument, and that instrument is called sense. And this sense, too, is cut off and extinguished by suffering on the part of the body, when any one is blinded; while the mind remains the same; and its attention, since the eyes are lost, has not, indeed, the sense of the body which it may join, by seeing, to the body without it, and so fix its look thereupon and see it, yet by the very effort shows that, although the bodily sense be taken away, itself can neither perish nor be diminished. For there remains unimpaired a

desire [appetitus] of seeing, whether it can be carried into effect or not. These three, then, the body that is seen, and vision itself, and the attention of mind which joins both together, are manifestly distinguishable, not only on account of the properties of each, but also on account of the difference of their natures.

3. And since, in this case, the sensation does not proceed from that body which is seen, but from the body of the living being that perceives, with which the soul is tempered together in some wonderful way of its own; yet vision is produced, that is, the sense itself is informed, by the body which is seen; so that now, not only is there the power of sense, which can exist also unimpaired even in darkness, provided the eyes are sound, but also a sense actually informed, which is called vision. Vision, then, is produced from a thing that is visible; but not from that alone, unless there be present also one who sees. Therefore vision is produced from a thing that is visible, together with one who sees; in such way that, on the part of him who sees, there is the sense of seeing and the intention of looking and gazing at the object; while yet that information of the sense, which is called vision, is imprinted only by the body which is seen, that is, by some visible thing; which being taken away, that form remains no more which was in the sense so long as that which was seen was present: yet the sense itself remains, which existed also before anything was perceived; just as the trace of a thing in water remains so long as the body itself, which is impressed on it, is in the water; but if this has been taken away, there will no longer be any such trace, although the water remains, which existed also before it took the form of that body. And therefore we cannot, indeed, say that a visible thing produces the sense; yet it produces the form, which is, as it were, its own likeness, which comes to be in the sense, when we perceive anything by seeing. But we do not distinguish, through the same sense, the form of the body which we see, from the form which is produced by it in the sense of him who sees; since the union of the two is so close that there is no room for distinguishing them. But we rationally infer that we could not have sensation at all, unless some similitude of the body seen was wrought in our own sense. For when a ring is imprinted on wax, it does not follow that no image is produced, because we cannot discern it unless when it has been separated. But since, after the wax is separated, what was made remains, so

that it can be seen; we are on that account easily persuaded that there was already also in the wax a form impressed from the ring before it was separated from it. But if the ring were imprinted upon a fluid, no image at all would appear when it was withdrawn; and yet none the less for this ought the reason to discern that there was in that fluid before the ring was withdrawn a form of the ring produced from the ring, which is to be distinguished from that form which is in the ring, whence that form was produced which ceases to be when the ring is withdrawn, although that in the ring remains, whence the other was produced. And so the [sensuous] perception of the eyes may not be supposed to contain no image of the body, which is seen as long as it is seen, [merely] because when that is withdrawn the image does not remain. And hence it is very difficult to persuade men of duller mind that an image of the visible thing is formed in our sense, when we see it, and that this same form is vision.

4. But if any perhaps attend to what I am about to mention, they will find no such trouble in this inquiry. Commonly, when we have looked for some little time at a light, and then shut our eyes, there seem to play before our eyes certain bright colors variously changing themselves, and shining less and less until they wholly cease; and these we must understand to be the remains of that form which was wrought in the sense, while the shining body was seen, and that these variations take place in them as they slowly and step by step fade away. For the lattices, too, of windows, should we happen to be gazing at them, appear often in these colors; so that it is evident that our sense is affected by such impressions from that thing which is seen. That form therefore existed also while we were seeing, and at that time it was more clear and express. But it was then closely joined with the species of that thing which was being perceived, so that it could not be at all distinguished from it; and this was vision itself. Why, even when the little flame of a lamp is in some way, as it were, doubled by the divergent rays of the eyes, a twofold vision comes to pass, although the thing which is seen is one. For the same rays, as they shoot forth each from its own eye, are affected severally, in that they are not allowed to meet evenly and conjointly, in regarding that corporeal thing, so that one combined view might be formed from both. And so, if we shut one eye, we shall not see two flames, but one as it really is. But why, if we shut the left eye, that

appearance ceases to be seen, which was on the right; and if, in turn, we shut the right eye, that drops out of existence which was on the left, is a matter both tedious in itself, and not necessary at all to our present subject to inquire and discuss. For it is enough for the business in hand to consider, that unless some image, precisely like the thing we perceive, were produced in our sense, the appearance of the flame would not be doubled according to the number of the eyes; since a certain way of perceiving has been employed, which could separate the union of rays. Certainly nothing that is really single can be seen as if it were double by one eye, draw it down, or press, or distort it as you please, if the other is shut.

5. The case then being so, let us remember how these three things, although diverse in nature, are tempered together into a kind of unity; that is, the form of the body which is seen, and the image of it impressed on the sense, which is vision or sense informed, and the will of the mind which applies the sense to the sensible thing, and retains the vision itself in it. The first of these, that is, the visible thing itself, does not belong to the nature of the living being, except when we discern our own body. But the second belongs to that nature to this extent, that it is wrought in the body, and through the body in the soul; for it is wrought in the sense, which is neither without the body nor without the soul. But the third is of the soul alone, because it is the will. Although then the substances of these three are so different, yet they coalesce into such a unity that the two former can scarcely be distinguished, even with the intervention of the reason as judge, namely the form of the body which is seen, and the image of it which is wrought in the sense, that is, vision. And the will so powerfully combines these two, as both to apply the sense, in order to be informed, to that thing which is perceived, and to retain it when informed in that thing. And if it is so vehement that it can be called love, or desire, or lust, it vehemently affects also the rest of the body of the living being; and where a duller and harder matter does not resist, changes it into like shape and color. One may see the little body of a chameleon vary with ready change, according to the colors which it sees. And in the case of other animals, since their grossness of flesh does not easily admit change, the offspring, for the most part, betray the particular fancies of the mothers, whatever it is that they have beheld with special delight. For the more tender, and so to say, the more formable, are the

primary seeds, the more effectually and capably they follow the bent of the soul of the mother, and the phantasy that is wrought in it through that body, which it has greedily beheld. Abundant instances might be adduced, but one is sufficient, taken from the most trustworthy books; viz. what Jacob did, that the sheep and goats might give birth to offspring of various colors, by placing variegated rods before them in the troughs of water for them to look at as they drank, at the time they had conceived.

### CHAPTER 3

THE UNITY OF THE THREE TAKES PLACE IN THOUGHT, VIZ OF MEMORY, OF TERNAL VISION, AND OF WILL COMBINING BOTH

6. The rational soul, however, lives in a degenerate fashion, when it lives according to a trinity of the outer man; that is, when it applies to those things which form the bodily sense from without, not a praiseworthy will, by which to refer them to some useful end, but a base desire, by which to cleave to them. Since even if the form of the body, which was corporeally perceived, be withdrawn, its likeness remains in the memory, to which the will may again direct its eye, so as to be formed thence from within, as the sense was formed from without by the presentation of the sensible body. And so that trinity is produced from memory, from internal vision, and from the will which unites both. And when these three things are combined into one, from that combination itself they are called conception. And in these three there is no longer any diversity of substance. For neither is the sensible body there, which is altogether distinct from the nature of the living being, nor is the bodily sense there informed so as to produce vision, nor does the will itself perform its office of applying the sense, that is to be informed, to the sensible body, and of retaining it in it when informed; but in place of that bodily species which was perceived from without, there comes the memory retaining that species which the soul has imbibed through the bodily sense; and in place of that vision which was outward when the sense was informed through the sensible body, there comes a similar vision within, while the eye of the mind is informed from that which the memory retains, and the corporeal things that are thought of are absent; and the will itself, as before it applied the sense yet to be informed to the corporeal thing presented from without, and united it thereto when

informed, so now converts the vision of the recollecting mind to memory, in order that the mental sight may be informed by that which the memory has retained, and so there may be in the conception a like vision. And as it was the reason that distinguished the visible appearance by which the bodily sense was informed, from the similitude of it, which was wrought in the sense when informed in order to produce vision (otherwise they had been so united as to be thought altogether one and the same); so, although that phantasy also, which arises from the mind thinking of the appearance of a body that it has seen, consists of the similitude of the body which the memory retains, together with that which is thence formed in the eye of the mind that recollects; yet it so seems to be one and single, that it can only be discovered to be two by the judgment of reason, by which we understand that which remains in the memory, even when we think it from some other source, to be a different thing from that which is brought into being when we remember, that is, come back again to the memory, and there find the same appearance. And if this were not now there, we should say that we had so forgotten as to be altogether unable to recollect. And if the eye of him who recollects were not informed from that thing which was in the memory, the vision of the thinker could in no way take place; but the conjunction of both, that is, of that which the memory retains, and of that which is thence expressed so as to inform the eye of him who recollects, makes them appear as if they were one, because they are exceedingly like. But when the eye of the concipient is turned away thence, and has ceased to look at that which was perceived in the memory, then nothing of the form that was impressed thereon will remain in that eye, and it will be informed by that to which it had again been turned, so as to bring about another conception. Yet that remains which it has left in the memory, to which it may again be turned when we recollect it, and being turned thereto may be informed by it, and become one with that whence it is informed.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### HOW THIS UNITY COMES TO PASS

7. But if that will which moves to and fro, hither and thither, the eye that is to be informed, and unites it when formed, shall have wholly converged to the inward phantasy, and shall have absolutely turned the mind's eye from

the presence of the bodies which lie around the senses, and from the very bodily senses themselves, and shall have wholly turned it to that image, which is perceived within; then so exact a likeness of the bodily species expressed from the memory is presented, that not even reason itself is permitted to discern whether the body itself is seen without, or only something of the kind thought of within. For men sometimes either allured or frightened by over-much thinking of visible things, have even suddenly uttered words accordingly, as if in real fact they were engaged in the very midst of such actions or sufferings. And I remember some one telling me that he was wont to perceive in thought, so distinct and as it were solid, a form of a female body, as to be moved, as though it were a reality. Such power has the soul over its own body, and such influence has it in turning and changing the quality of its [corporeal] garment; just as a man may be affected when clothed, to whom his clothing sticks. It is the same kind of affection, too, with which we are beguiled through imaginations in sleep. But it makes a very great difference, whether the senses of the body are lulled to torpor, as in the case of sleepers, or disturbed from their inward structure, as in the case of madmen, or distracted in some other mode, as in that of diviners or prophets; and so from one or other of these causes, the intention of the mind is forced by a kind of necessity upon those images which occur to it, either from memory, or by some other hidden force through certain spiritual commixtures of a similarly spiritual substance: or whether, as sometimes happens to people in health and awake, that the will occupied by thought turns itself away from the senses, and so informs the eye of the mind by various images of sensible things, as though those sensible things themselves were actually perceived. But these impressions of images not only take place when the will is directed upon such things by desiring them, but also when, in order to avoid and guard against them, the mind is carried away to look upon these very thing so as to flee from them. And hence, not only desire, but fear, causes both the bodily eye to be informed by the sensible things themselves, and the mental eye (acies) by the images of those sensible things. Accordingly, the more vehement has been either fear or desire, the more distinctly is the eye informed, whether in the case of him who [sensuously] perceives by means of the body that which lies close to him in place, or in the case of him who conceives from the image of the body which is contained in the memory. What then a body



in place is to the bodily sense, that, the similitude of a body in memory is to the eye of the mind; and what the vision of one who looks at a thing is to that appearance of the body from which the sense is informed, that, the vision of a concipient is to the image of the body established in the memory, from which the eye of the mind is informed; and what the intention of the will is towards a body seen and the vision to be combined with it, in order that a certain unity of three things may therein take place, although their nature is diverse, that, the same intention of the will is towards combining the image of the body which is in the memory, and the vision of the concipient, that is, the form which the eye of the mind has taken in returning to the memory, in order that here too a certain unity may take place of three things, not now distinguished by diversity of nature, but of one and the same substance; because this whole is within, and the whole is one mind.

## CHAPTER 5

THE TRINITY OF THE OUTER MAN, OR OF EXTERNAL VISION, IS NOT AN IMAGE OF GOD. THE LIKENESS OF GOD IS DESIRED EVEN IN SINS. IN EXTERNAL VISION THE FORM OF THE CORPOREAL THING IS AS IT WERE THE PARENT, VISION THE OFFSPRING; BUT THE WILL THAT UNITES THESE SUGGESTS THE HOLY SPIRIT

8. But as, when [both] the form and species of a body have perished, the will cannot recall to it the sense of perceiving; so, when the image which memory bears is blotted out by forgetfulness, the will will be unable to force back the eye of the mind by recollection, so as to be formed thereby. But because the mind has great power to imagine not only things forgotten, but also things that it never saw, or experienced, either by increasing, or diminishing, or changing, or compounding, after its pleasure, those which have not dropped out of its remembrance, it often imagines things to be such as either it knows they are not, or does not know that they are. And in this case we have to take care, lest it either speak falsely that it may deceive, or hold an opinion so as to be deceived. And if it avoid these two evils, then imagined phantasms do not hinder it: just as sensible things experienced or retained by memory do not hinder it, if they are neither passionately sought for when pleasant, nor basely shunned when unpleasant. But when the will leaves better things, and greedily wallows in

these, then it becomes unclean; and they are so thought of hurtfully, when they are present, and also more hurtfully when they are absent. And he therefore lives badly and degenerately who lives according to the trinity of the outer man; because it is the purpose of using things sensible and corporeal, that has begotten also that trinity, which although it imagines within, yet imagines things without. For no one could use those things even well, unless the images of things perceived by the senses were retained in the memory. And unless the will for the greatest part dwells in the higher and interior things, and unless that will itself, which is accommodated either to bodies without, or to the images of them within, refers whatever it receives in them to a better and truer life, and rests in that end by gazing at which it judges that those things ought to be done; what else do we do, but that which the apostle prohibits us from doing, when he says, “Be not conformed to this world”? And therefore that trinity is not an image of God since it is produced in the mind itself through the bodily sense, from the lowest, that is, the corporeal creature, than which the mind is higher. Yet neither is it altogether dissimilar: for what is there that has not a likeness of God, in proportion to its kind and measure, seeing that God made all things very good, and for no other reason except that He Himself is supremely good? In so far, therefore, as anything that is, is good, in so far plainly it has still some likeness of the supreme good, at however great a distance; and if a natural likeness, then certainly a right and well-ordered one; but if a faulty likeness, then certainly a debased and perverse one. For even souls in their very sins strive after nothing else but some kind of likeness of God, in a proud and preposterous, and, so to say, slavish liberty. So neither could our first parents have been persuaded to sin unless it had been said, “Ye shall be as gods.” No doubt every thing in the creatures which is in any way like God, is not also to be called His image; but that alone than which He Himself alone is higher. For that only is in all points copied from Him, between which and Himself no nature is interposed.

9. Of that vision then; that is, of the form which is wrought in the sense of him who sees; the form of the bodily thing from which it is wrought, is, as it were, the parent. But it is not a true parent; whence neither is that a true offspring; for it is not altogether born therefrom, since something else is applied to the bodily thing in order that it may be formed from it, namely,

the sense of him who sees. And for this reason, to love this is to be estranged. Therefore the will which unites both, viz. the quasi-parent and the quasi-child, is more spiritual than either of them. For that bodily thing which is discerned, is not spiritual at all. But the vision which comes into existence in the sense, has something spiritual mingled with it, since it cannot come into existence without the soul. But it is not wholly spiritual; since that which is formed is a sense of the body. Therefore the will which unites both is confessedly more spiritual, as I have said; and so it begins to suggest (insinuate), as it were, the person of the Spirit in the Trinity. But it belongs more to the sense that is formed, than to the bodily thing whence it is formed. For the sense and will of an animate being belongs to the soul, not to the stone or other bodily thing that is seen. It does not therefore proceed from that bodily thing as from a parent; yet neither does it proceed from that other as it were offspring, namely, the vision and form that is in the sense. For the will existed before the vision came to pass, which will applied the sense that was to be formed to the bodily thing that was to be discerned; but it was not yet satisfied. For how could that which was not yet seen satisfy? And satisfaction means a will that rests content. And, therefore, we can neither call the will the quasi-offspring of vision, since it existed before vision; nor the quasi-parent, since that vision was not formed and expressed from the will, but from the bodily thing that was seen.

## CHAPTER 6

### OF WHAT KIND WE ARE TO RECKON THE REST (REQUIES), AND END (FINIS), OF THE WILL IN VISION

10. Perhaps we can rightly call vision the end and rest of the will, only with respect to this one object [namely, the bodily thing that is visible]. For it will not will nothing else merely because it sees something which it is now willing. It is not therefore the whole will itself of the man, of which the end is nothing else than blessedness; but the will provisionally directed to this one object, which has as its end in seeing, nothing but vision, whether it refer the thing seen to any other thing or not. For if it does not refer the vision to anything further, but wills only to see this, there can be no question made about showing that the end of the will is the vision; for it is manifest. But if it does refer it to anything further, then certainly it does will

something else, and it will not be now a will merely to see; or if to see, not one to see the particular thing. Just as, if any one wished to see the scar, that from thence he might learn that there had been a wound; or wished to see the window, that through the window he might see the passers-by: all these and other such acts of will have their own proper [proximate] ends, which are referred to that [final] end of the will by which we will to live blessedly, and to attain to that life which is not referred to anything else, but suffices of itself to him who loves it. The will then to see, has as its end vision; and the will to see this particular thing, has as its end the vision of this particular thing. Therefore the will to see the scar, desires its own end, that is, the vision of the scar, and does not reach beyond it; for the will to prove that there had been a wound, is a distinct will, although dependent upon that, of which the end also is to prove that there had been a wound. And the will to see the window, has as its end the vision of the window; for that is another and further will which depends upon it, viz. to see the passers-by through the window, of which also the end is the vision of the passers-by. But all the several wills that are bound to each other, are at once right, if that one is good, to which all are referred; and if that is bad, then all are bad. And so the connected series of right wills is a sort of road which consists as it were of certain steps, whereby to ascend to blessedness; but the entanglement of depraved and distorted wills is a bond by which he will be bound who thus acts, so as to be cast into outer darkness. Blessed therefore are they who in act and character sing the song of the steps [degrees]; and woe to those that draw sin, as it were a long rope. And it is just the same to speak of the will being in repose, which we call its end, if it is still referred to something further, as if we should say that the foot is at rest in walking, when it is placed there, whence yet another foot may be planted in the direction of the man's steps. But if something so satisfies, that the will acquiesces in it with a certain delight; it is nevertheless not yet that to which the man ultimately tends; but this too is referred to something further, so as to be regarded not as the native country of a citizen, but as a place of refreshment, or even of stopping, for a traveller.

## CHAPTER 7

### THERE IS ANOTHER TRINITY IN THE MEMORY OF HIM WHO THINKS OVER AGAIN WHAT HE HAS SEEN

11. But yet again, take the case of another trinity, more inward indeed than that which is in things sensible, and in the senses, but which is yet conceived from thence; while now it is no longer the sense of the body that is informed from the body, but the eye of the mind that is informed from the memory, since the species of the body which we perceived from without has inhered in the memory itself. And that species, which is in the memory, we call the quasi-parent of that which is wrought in the phantasy of one who conceives. For it was in the memory also, before we conceived it, just as the body was in place also before we [sensuously] perceived it, in order that vision might take place. But when it is conceived, then from that form which the memory retains, there is copied in the mind's eye (*acie*) of him who conceives, and by remembrance is formed, that species, which is the quasi-offspring of that which the memory retains. But neither is the one a true parent, nor the other a true offspring. For the mind's vision which is formed from memory when we think anything by recollection, does not proceed from that species which we remember as seen; since we could not indeed have remembered those things, unless we had seen them; yet the mind's eye, which is informed by the recollection, existed also before we saw the body that we remember; and therefore how much more before we committed it to memory? Although therefore the form which is wrought in the mind's eye of him who remembers, is wrought from that form which is in the memory; yet the mind's eye itself does not exist from thence, but existed before it. And it follows, that if the one is not a true parent, neither is the other a true offspring. But both that quasi-parent and that quasi-offspring suggest something, whence the inner and truer things may appear more practically and more certainly.

12. Further, it is more difficult to discern clearly, whether the will which connects the vision to the memory is not either the parent or the offspring of some one of them; and the likeness and equality of the same nature and substance cause this difficulty of distinguishing. For it is not possible to do in this case, as with the sense that is formed from without (which is easily

discerned from the sensible body, and again the will from both), on account of the difference of nature which is mutually in all three, and of which we have treated sufficiently above. For although this trinity, of which we at present speak, is introduced into the mind from without; yet it is transacted within, and there is no part of it outside of the nature of the mind itself. In what way, then, can it be demonstrated that the will is neither the quasi-parent, nor the quasi-offspring, either of the corporeal likeness which is contained in the memory, or of that which is copied thence in recollecting; when it so unites both in the act of conceiving, as that they appear singly as one, and cannot be discerned except by reason? It is then first to be considered that there cannot be any will to remember, unless we retain in the recesses of the memory either the whole, or some part, of that thing which we wish to remember. For the very will to remember cannot arise in the case of a thing which we have forgotten altogether and absolutely; since we have already remembered that the thing which we wish to remember is or has been, in our memory. For example, if I wish to remember what I supped on yesterday, either I have already remembered that I did sup, or if not yet this, at least I have remembered something about that time itself, if nothing else; at all events, I have remembered yesterday, and that part of yesterday in which people usually sup, and what supping is. For if I had not remembered anything at all of this kind, I could not wish to remember what I supped on yesterday. Whence we may perceive that the will of remembering proceeds, indeed, from those things which are retained in the memory, with the addition also of those which, by the act of discerning, are copied thence through recollection; that is, from the combination of something which we have remembered, and of the vision which was thence wrought, when we remembered, in the mind's eye of him who thinks. But the will itself which unites both requires also some other thing, which is, as it were, close at hand, and adjacent to him who remembers. There are, then, as many trinities of this kind as there are remembrances; because there is no one of them wherein there are not these three things, viz. that which was stored up in the memory also before it was thought, and that which takes place in the conception when this is discerned, and the will that unites both, and from both and itself as a third, completes one single thing. Or is it rather that we so recognize some one trinity in this kind, as that we are to speak generally, of whatever corporeal species lie hidden in the memory, as

of a single unity, and again of the general vision of the mind which remembers and conceives such things, as of a single unity, to the combination of which two there is to be joined as a third the will that combines them, that this whole may be a certain unity made up from three?

## CHAPTER 8

### DIFFERENT MODES OF CONCEIVING

But since the eye of the mind cannot look at all things together, in one glance, which the memory retains, these trinities of thought alternate in a series of withdrawals and successions, and so that trinity becomes most innumerably numerous; and yet not infinite, if it pass not beyond the number of things stored up in the memory. For, although we begin to reckon from the earliest perception which any one has of material things through any bodily sense, and even take in also those things which he has forgotten, yet the number would undoubtedly be certain and determined, although innumerable. For we not only call infinite things innumerable, but also those, which, although finite, exceed any one's power of reckoning.

13. But we can hence perceive a little more clearly that what the memory stores up and retains is a different thing from that which is thence copied in the conception of the man who remembers, although, when both are combined together, they appear to be one and the same; because we can only remember just as many species of bodies as we have actually seen, and so great, and such, as we have actually seen; for the mind imbibes them into the memory from the bodily sense; whereas the things seen in conception, although drawn from those things which are in the memory, yet are multiplied and varied innumerably, and altogether without end. For I remember, no doubt, but one sun, because according to the fact, I have seen but one; but if I please, I conceive of two, or three, or as many as I will; but the vision of my mind, when I conceive of many, is formed from the same memory by which I remember one. And I remember it just as large as I saw it. For if I remember it as larger or smaller than I saw it, then I no longer remember what I saw, and so I do not remember it. But because I remember it, I remember it as large as I saw it; yet I conceive of it as greater or as less according to my will. And I remember it as I saw it; but I conceive of it as

running its course as I will, and as standing still where I will, and as coming whence I will, and whither I will. For it is in my power to conceive of it as square, although I remember it as round; and again, of what color I please, although I have never seen, and therefore do not remember, a green sun; and as the sun, so all other things. But owing to the corporeal and sensible nature of these forms of things, the mind falls into error when it imagines them to exist without, in the same mode in which it conceives them within, either when they have already ceased to exist without, but are still retained in the memory, or when in any other way also, that which we remember is formed in the mind, not by faithful recollection, but after the variations of thought.

14. Yet it very often happens that we believe also a true narrative, told us by others, of things which the narrators have themselves perceived by their senses. And in this case, when we conceive the things narrated to us, as we hear them, the eye of the mind does not seem to be turned back to the memory, in order to bring up visions in our thoughts; for we do not conceive these things from our own recollection, but upon the narration of another; and that trinity does not here seem to come to its completion, which is made when the species lying hid in the memory, and the vision of the man that remembers, are combined by will as a third. For I do not conceive that which lay hid in my memory, but that which I hear, when anything is narrated to me. I am not speaking of the words themselves of the speaker, lest any one should suppose that I have gone off to that other trinity, which is transacted without, in sensible things, or in the senses: but I am conceiving of those species of material things, which the narrator signifies to me by words and sounds; which species certainly I conceive of not by remembering, but by hearing. But if we consider the matter more carefully, even in this case, the limit of the memory is not overstepped. For I could not even understand the narrator, if I did not remember generically the individual things of which he speaks, even although I then hear them for the first time as connected together in one tale. For he who, for instance, describes to me some mountain stripped of timber, and clothed with olive trees, describes it to me who remembers the species both of mountains, and of timber, and of olive trees; and if I had forgotten these, I should not know at all of what he was speaking, and therefore could not conceive that



description. And so it comes to pass, that every one who conceives things corporeal, whether he himself imagine anything, or hear, or read, either a narrative of things past, or a foretelling of things future, has recourse to his memory, and finds there the limit and measure of all the forms at which he gazes in his thought. For no one can conceive at all, either a color or a form of body, which he never saw, or a sound which he never heard, or a flavor which he never tasted, or a scent which he never smelt, or any touch of a corporeal thing which he never felt. But if no one conceives anything corporeal except what he has [sensuously] perceived, because no one remembers anything corporeal except what he has thus perceived, then, as is the limit of perceiving in bodies, so is the limit of thinking in the memory. For the sense receives the species from that body which we perceive, and the memory from the sense; but the mental eye of the concipient, from the memory.

15. Further, as the will applies the sense to the bodily object, so it applies the memory to the sense, and the eye of the mind of the concipient to the memory. But that which harmonizes those things and unites them, itself also disjoins and separates them, that is, the will. But it separates the bodily senses from the bodies that are to be perceived, by movement of the body, either to hinder our perceiving the thing, or that we may cease to perceive it: as when we avert our eyes from that which we are unwilling to see, or shut them; so, again, the ears from sounds, or the nostrils from smells. So also we turn away from tastes, either by shutting the mouth, or by casting the thing out of the mouth. In touch, also, we either remove the bodily thing, that we may not touch what we do not wish, or if we were already touching it, we fling or push it away. Thus the will acts by movement of the body, so that the bodily sense shall not be joined to the sensible things. And it does this according to its power; for when it endures hardship in so doing, on account of the condition of slavish mortality, then torment is the result, in such wise that nothing remains to the will save endurance. But the will averts the memory from the sense; when, through its being intent on something else, it does not suffer things present to cleave to it. As any one may see, when often we do not seem to ourselves to have heard some one who was speaking to us, because we were thinking of something else. But this is a mistake; for we did hear, but we do not remember, because the

words of the speaker presently slipped out of the perception of our ears, through the bidding of the will being diverted elsewhere, by which they are usually fixed in the memory. Therefore, we should say more accurately in such a case, we do not remember, than, we did not hear; for it happens even in reading, and to myself very frequently, that when I have read through a page or an epistle, I do not know what I have read, and I begin it again. For the purpose of the will being fixed on something else, the memory was not so applied to the bodily sense, as the sense itself was applied to the letters. So, too, any one who walks with the will intent on something else, does not know where he has got to; for if he had not seen, he would not have walked thither, or would have felt his way in walking with greater attention, especially if he was passing through a place he did not know; yet, because he walked easily, certainly he saw; but because the memory was not applied to the sense itself in the same way as the sense of the eyes was applied to the places through which he was passing, he could not remember at all even the last thing he saw. Now, to will to turn away the eye of the mind from that which is in the memory, is nothing else but not to think thereupon.

## CHAPTER 9

### SPECIES IS PRODUCED BY SPECIES IN SUCCESSION

16. In this arrangement, then, while we begin from the bodily species and arrive finally at the species which comes to be in the intuition (contuitu) of the concipient, we find four species born, as it were, step by step one from the other, the second from the first, the third from the second, the fourth from the third: since from the species of the body itself, there arises that which comes to be in the sense of the percipient; and from this, that which comes to be in the memory; and from this, that which comes to be in the mind's eye of the concipient. And the will, therefore, thrice combines as it were parent with offspring: first the species of the body with that to which it gives birth in the sense of the body; and that again with that which from it comes to be in the memory; and this also, thirdly, with that which is born from it in the intuition of the concipient's mind. But the intermediate combination which is the second, although it is nearer to the first, is yet not so like the first as the third is. For there are two kinds of vision, the one of [sensuous] perception (sentientis), the other of conception (cogitantis). But

in order that the vision of conception may come to be, there is wrought for the purpose, in the memory, from the vision of [sensuous] perception something like it, to which the eye of the mind may turn itself in conceiving, as the glance (acies) of the eyes turns itself in [sensuously] perceiving to the bodily object. I have, therefore, chosen to put forward two trinities in this kind: one when the vision of [sensuous] perception is formed from the bodily object, the other when the vision of conception is formed from the memory. But I have refrained from commending an intermediate one; because we do not commonly call it vision, when the form which comes to be in the sense of him who perceives, is entrusted to the memory. Yet in all cases the will does not appear unless as the combiner as it were of parent and offspring; and so, proceed from whence it may, it can be called neither parent nor offspring.

## CHAPTER 10

THE IMAGINATION ALSO ADDS EVEN TO THINGS WE HAVE NOT SEEN, THOSE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN ELSEWHERE

17. But if we do not remember except what we have [sensuously] perceived, nor conceive except what we remember; why do we often conceive things that are false, when certainly we do not remember falsely those things which we have perceived, unless it be because that will (which I have already taken pains to show as much as I can to be the uniter and the separator of things of this kind) leads the vision of the conceiver that is to be formed, after its own will and pleasure, through the hidden stores of the memory; and, in order to conceive [imagine] those things which we do not remember, impels it to take one thing from hence, and another from thence, from those which we do remember; and these things combining into one vision make something which is called false, because it either does not exist externally in the nature of corporeal things, or does not seem copied from the memory, in that we do not remember that we ever saw such a thing. For who ever saw a black swan? And therefore no one remembers a black swan; yet who is there that cannot conceive it? For it is easy to apply to that shape which we have come to know by seeing it, a black color, which we have not the less seen in other bodies; and because we have seen both, we remember both. Neither do I remember a bird with four feet, because I never saw one;

but I contemplate such a phantasy very easily, by adding to some winged shape such as I have seen, two other feet, such as I have likewise seen. And therefore, in conceiving conjointly, what we remember to have seen singly, we seem not to conceive that which we remember; while we really do this under the law of the memory, whence we take everything which we join together after our own pleasure in manifold and diverse ways. For we do not conceive even the very magnitudes of bodies, which magnitudes we never saw, without help of the memory; for the measure of space to which our gaze commonly reaches through the magnitude of the world, is the measure also to which we enlarge the bulk of bodies, whatever they may be, when we conceive them as great as we can. And reason, indeed, proceeds still beyond, but phantasy does not follow her; as when reason announces the infinity of number also, which no vision of him who conceives according to corporeal things can apprehend. The same reason also teaches that the most minute atoms are infinitely divisible; yet when we have come to those slight and minute particles which we remember to have seen, then we can no longer behold phantasms more slender and more minute, although reason does not cease to continue to divide them. So we conceive no corporeal things, except either those we remember, or from those things which we remember.

## CHAPTER 11

### NUMBER, WEIGHT, MEASURE

18. But because those things which are impressed on the memory singly, can be conceived according to number, measure seems to belong to the memory, but number to the vision; because, although the multiplicity of such visions is innumerable, yet a limit not to be transgressed is prescribed for each in the memory. Therefore, measure appears in the memory, number in the vision of things: as there is some measure in visible bodies themselves, to which measure the sense of those who see is most numerously adjusted, and from one visible object is formed the vision of many beholders, so that even a single person sees commonly a single thing under a double appearance, on account of the number of his two eyes, as we have laid down above. Therefore there is some measure in those things whence visions are copied, but in the visions themselves there is number.

But the will which unites and regulates these things, and combines them into a certain unity, and does not quietly rest its desire of [sensuously] perceiving or of conceiving, except in those things from whence the visions are formed, resembles weight. And therefore I would just notice by way of anticipation these three things, measure, number, weight, which are to be perceived in all other things also. In the meantime, I have now shown as much as I can, and to whom I can, that the will is the uniter of the visible thing and of the vision; as it were, of parent and of offspring; whether in [sensuous] perception or in conception, and that it cannot be called either parent or offspring. Wherefore time admonishes us to seek for this same trinity in the inner man, and to strive to pass inwards from that animal and carnal and (as he is called) outward man, of whom I have so long spoken. And here we hope to be able to find an image of God according to the Trinity, He Himself helping our efforts, who as things themselves show, and as Holy Scripture also witnesses, has regulated all things in measure, and number, and weight.

# Book XII

Commencing with a distinction between wisdom and knowledge, points out a kind of trinity, of a peculiar sort, in that which is properly called knowledge, and which is the lower of the two; and this trinity, although it certainly pertains to the inner man, is still not yet to be called or thought an image of God.

## CHAPTER 1

### OF WHAT KIND ARE THE OUTER AND THE INNER MAN

1. Come now, and let us see where lies, as it were, the boundary line between the outer and inner man. For whatever we have in the mind common with the beasts, thus much is rightly said to belong to the outer man. For the outer man is not to be considered to be the body only, but with the addition also of a certain peculiar life of the body, whence the structure of the body derives its vigor, and all the senses with which he is equipped for the perception of outward things; and when the images of these outward things already perceived, that have been fixed in the memory, are seen again by recollection, it is still a matter pertaining to the outer man. And in all these things we do not differ from the beasts, except that in shape of body we are not prone, but upright. And we are admonished through this, by Him who made us, not to be like the beasts in that which is our better part—that is, the mind—while we differ from them by the uprightness of the body. Not that we are to throw our mind into those bodily things which are exalted; for to seek rest for the will, even in such things, is to prostrate the mind. But as the body is naturally raised upright to those bodily things which are most elevated, that is, to things celestial; so the mind, which is a spiritual substance, must be raised upright to those things which are most elevated in spiritual things, not by the elation of pride, but by the dutifulness of righteousness.

## CHAPTER 2

### MAN ALONE OF ANIMATE CREATURES PERCEIVES THE ETERNAL REASONS OF THINGS PERTAINING TO THE BODY

2. And the beasts, too, are able both to perceive things corporeal from without, through the senses of the body, and to fix them in the memory, and remember them, and in them to seek after things suitable, and shun things inconvenient. But to note these things, and to retain them not only as caught up naturally but also as deliberately committed to memory, and to imprint them again by recollection and conception when now just slipping away into forgetfulness; in order that as conception is formed from that which the memory contains, so also the contents themselves of the memory may be fixed firmly by thought: to combine again imaginary objects of sight, by taking this or that of what the memory remembers, and, as it were, tacking them to one another: to examine after what manner it is that in this kind things like the true are to be distinguished from the true, and this not in things spiritual, but in corporeal things themselves;—these acts, and the like, although performed in reference to things sensible, and those which the mind has deduced through the bodily senses, yet, as they are combined with reason, so are not common to men and beasts. But it is the part of the higher reason to judge of these corporeal things according to incorporeal and eternal reasons; which, unless they were above the human mind, would certainly not be unchangeable; and yet, unless something of our own were subjoined to them, we should not be able to employ them as our measures by which to judge of corporeal things. But we judge of corporeal things from the rule of dimensions and figures, which the mind knows to remain unchangeably.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE HIGHER REASON WHICH BELONGS TO CONTEMPLATION, AND THE LOWER WHICH BELONGS TO ACTION, ARE IN ONE MIND

3. But that of our own which thus has to do with the handling of corporeal and temporal things, is indeed rational, in that it is not common to us with the beasts; but it is drawn, as it were, out of that rational substance of our mind, by which we depend upon and cleave to the intelligible and

unchangeable truth, and which is deputed to handle and direct the inferior things. For as among all the beasts there was not found for the man a help like unto him, unless one were taken from himself, and formed to be his consort: so for that mind, by which we consult the supernal and inward truth, there is no like help for such employment as man's nature requires among things corporeal out of those parts of the soul which we have in common with the beasts. And so a certain part of our reason, not separated so as to sever unity, but, as it were, diverted so as to be a help to fellowship, is parted off for the performing of its proper work. And as the twain is one flesh in the case of male and female, so in the mind one nature embraces our intellect and action, or our counsel and performance, or our reason and rational appetite, or whatever other more significant terms there may be by which to express them; so that, as it was said of the former, "And they two shall be in one flesh," it may be said of these, they two are in one mind.

#### CHAPTER 4

THE TRINITY AND THE IMAGE OF GOD IS IN THAT PART OF THE MIND ALONE WHICH BELONGS TO THE CONTEMPLATION OF ETERNAL THINGS

4. When, therefore, we discuss the nature of the human mind, we discuss a single subject, and do not double it into those two which I have mentioned, except in respect to its functions. Therefore, when we seek the trinity in the mind, we seek it in the whole mind, without separating the action of the reason in things temporal from the contemplation of things eternal, so as to have further to seek some third thing, by which a trinity may be completed. But this trinity must needs be so discovered in the whole nature of the mind, as that even if action upon temporal things were to be withdrawn, for which work that help is necessary, with a view to which some part of the mind is diverted in order to deal with these inferior things, yet a trinity would still be found in the one mind that is no where parted off; and that when this distribution has been already made, not only a trinity may be found, but also an image of God, in that alone which belongs to the contemplation of eternal things; while in that other which is diverted from it in the dealing with temporal things, although there may be a trinity, yet there cannot be found an image of God.



## CHAPTER 5

### THE OPINION WHICH DEVISES AN IMAGE OF THE TRINITY IN THE MARRIAGE OF MALE AND FEMALE, AND IN THEIR OFFSPRING

5. Accordingly they do not seem to me to advance a probable opinion, who lay it down that a trinity of the image of God in three persons, so far as regards human nature, can so be discovered as to be completed in the marriage of male and female and in their offspring; in that the man himself, as it were, indicates the person of the Father, but that which has so proceeded from him as to be born, that of the Son; and so the third person as of the Spirit, is, they say, the woman, who has so proceeded from the man as not herself to be either son or daughter, although it was by her conception that the offspring was born. For the Lord hath said of the Holy Spirit that He proceedeth from the Father, and yet he is not a son. In this erroneous opinion, then, the only point probably alleged, and indeed sufficiently shown according to the faith of the Holy Scripture, is this,—in the account of the original creation of the woman,—that what so comes into existence from some person as to make another person, cannot in every case be called a son; since the person of the woman came into existence from the person of the man, and yet she is not called his daughter. All the rest of this opinion is in truth so absurd, nay indeed so false, that it is most easy to refute it. For I pass over such a thing, as to think the Holy Spirit to be the mother of the Son of God, and the wife of the Father; since perhaps it may be answered that these things offend us in carnal things, because we think of bodily conceptions and births. Although these very things themselves are most chastely thought of by the pure, to whom all things are pure; but to the defiled and unbelieving, of whom both the mind and conscience are polluted, nothing is pure; so that even Christ, born of a virgin according to the flesh, is a stumbling-block to some of them. But yet in the case of those supreme spiritual things, after the likeness of which those kinds of the inferior creature also are made although most remotely, and where there is nothing that can be injured and nothing corruptible, nothing born in time, nothing formed from that which is formless, or whatever like expressions there may be; yet they ought not to disturb the sober prudence of any one, lest in avoiding empty disgust he run into pernicious error. Let him accustom himself so to find in corporeal things the traces of things spiritual,

that when he begins to ascend upwards from thence, under the guidance of reason, in order to attain to the unchangeable truth itself through which these things were made, he may not draw with himself to things above what he despises in things below. For no one ever blushed to choose for himself wisdom as a wife, because the name of wife puts into a man's thoughts the corruptible connection which consists in begetting children; or because in truth wisdom itself is a woman in sex, since it is expressed in both Greek and Latin tongues by a word of the feminine gender.

## CHAPTER 6

### WHY THIS OPINION IS TO BE REJECTED

6. We do not therefore reject this opinion, because we fear to think of that holy and inviolable and unchangeable Love, as the spouse of God the Father, existing as it does from Him, but not as an offspring in order to beget the Word by which all things are made; but because divine Scripture evidently shows it to be false. For God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" and a little after it is said, "So God created man in the image of God." Certainly, in that it is of the plural number, the word "our" would not be rightly used if man were made in the image of one person, whether of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit; but because he was made in the image of the Trinity, on that account it is said, "After our image." But again, lest we should think that three Gods were to be believed in the Trinity, whereas the same Trinity is one God, it is said, "So God created man in the image of God," instead of saying, "In His own image."

7. For such expressions are customary in the Scriptures; and yet some persons, while maintaining the Catholic faith, do not carefully attend to them, in such wise that they think the words, "God made man in the image of God," to mean that the Father made man after the image of the Son; and they thus desire to assert that the Son also is called God in the divine Scriptures, as if there were not other most true and clear proofs wherein the Son is called not only God, but also the true God. For whilst they aim at explaining another difficulty in this text, they become so entangled that they cannot extricate themselves. For if the Father made man after the image of

the Son, so that he is not the image of the Father, but of the Son, then the Son is unlike the Father. But if a pious faith teaches us, as it does, that the Son is like the Father after an equality of essence, then that which is made in the likeness of the Son must needs also be made in the likeness of the Father. Further, if the Father made man not in His own image, but in the image of His Son, why does He not say, "Let us make man after Thy image and likeness," whereas He does say, "our;" unless it be because the image of the Trinity was made in man, that in this way man should be the image of the one true God, because the Trinity itself is the one true God? Such expressions are innumerable in the Scriptures, but it will suffice to have produced these. It is so said in the Psalms, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; Thy blessing is upon Thy people;" as if the words were spoken to some one else, not to Him of whom it had been said, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." And again, "For by Thee," he says, "I shall be delivered from temptation, and by hoping in my God I shall leap over the wall;" as if he said to some one else, "By Thee I shall be delivered from temptation." And again, "In the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under Thee;" as if he were to say, in the heart of Thy enemies. For he had said to that King, that is, to our Lord Jesus Christ, "The people fall under Thee," whom he intended by the word King, when he said, "In the heart of the king's enemies." Things of this kind are found more rarely in the New Testament. But yet the apostle says to the Romans, "Concerning His Son who was made to Him of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord;" as though he were speaking above of some one else. For what is meant by the Son of God declared by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ, except of the same Jesus Christ who was declared to be Son of God with power? And as then in this passage, when we are told, "the Son of God with power of Jesus Christ," or "the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness of Jesus Christ," or "the Son of God by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ," whereas it might have been expressed in the ordinary way, In His own power, or according to the spirit of His own holiness, or by the resurrection of His dead, or of their dead: as, I say, we are not compelled to understand another person, but one and the same, that is, the person of the Son of God our Lord Jesus Christ; so, when we are told that "God made

man in the image of God,” although it might have been more usual to say, after His own image, yet we are not compelled to understand any other person in the Trinity, but the one and selfsame Trinity itself, who is one God, and after whose image man is made.

8. And since the case stands thus, if we are to accept the same image of the Trinity, as not in one, but in three human beings, father and mother and son, then the man was not made after the image of God before a wife was made for him, and before they procreated a son; because there was not yet a trinity. Will any one say there was already a trinity, because, although not yet in their proper form, yet in their original nature, both the woman was already in the side of the man, and the son in the loins of his father? Why then, when Scripture had said, “God made man after the image of God,” did it go on to say, “God created him; male and female created He them: and God blessed them”? (Or if it is to be so divided, “And God created man,” so that thereupon is to be added, “in the image of God created He him,” and then subjoined in the third place, “male and female created He them;” for some have feared to say, He made him male and female, lest something monstrous, as it were, should be understood, as are those whom they call hermaphrodites, although even so both might be understood not falsely in the singular number, on account of that which is said, “Two in one flesh.”) Why then, as I began by saying, in regard to the nature of man made after the image of God, does Scripture specify nothing except male and female? Certainly, in order to complete the image of the Trinity, it ought to have added also son, although still placed in the loins of his father, as the woman was in his side. Or was it perhaps that the woman also had been already made, and that Scripture had combined in a short and comprehensive statement, that of which it was going to explain afterwards more carefully, how it was done; and that therefore a son could not be mentioned, because no son was yet born? As if the Holy Spirit could not have comprehended this, too, in that brief statement, while about to narrate the birth of the son afterwards in its own place; as it narrated afterwards in its own place, that the woman was taken from the side of the man, and yet has not omitted here to name her.

## CHAPTER 7

HOW MAN IS THE IMAGE OF GOD. WHETHER THE WOMAN IS NOT ALSO THE IMAGE OF GOD. HOW THE SAYING OF THE APOSTLE, THAT THE MAN IS THE IMAGE OF GOD, BUT THE WOMAN IS THE GLORY OF THE MAN, IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD FIGURATIVELY AND MYSTICALLY

9. We ought not therefore so to understand that man is made in the image of the supreme Trinity, that is, in the image of God, as that the same image should be understood to be in three human beings; especially when the apostle says that the man is the image of God, and on that account removes the covering from his head, which he warns the woman to use, speaking thus: “For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man.” What then shall we say to this? If the woman fills up the image of the trinity after the measure of her own person, why is the man still called that image after she has been taken out of his side? Or if even one person of a human being out of three can be called the image of God, as each person also is God in the supreme Trinity itself, why is the woman also not the image of God? For she is instructed for this very reason to cover her head, which he is forbidden to do because he is the image of God.

10. But we must notice how that which the apostle says, that not the woman but the man is the image of God, is not contrary to that which is written in Genesis, “God created man: in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them: and He blessed them.” For this text says that human nature itself, which is complete [only] in both sexes, was made in the image of God; and it does not separate the woman from the image of God which it signifies. For after saying that God made man in the image of God, “He created him,” it says, “male and female:” or at any rate, punctuating the words otherwise, “male and female created He them.” How then did the apostle tell us that the man is the image of God, and therefore he is forbidden to cover his head; but that the woman is not so, and therefore is commanded to cover hers? Unless, forsooth, according to that which I have said already, when I was treating of the nature of the human mind, that the woman together with her own husband is the image of God, so that that whole substance may be one image; but when she is referred separately to her quality of help-meet, which regards the woman herself

alone, then she is not the image of God; but as regards the man alone, he is the image of God as fully and completely as when the woman too is joined with him in one. As we said of the nature of the human mind, that both in the case when as a whole it contemplates the truth it is the image of God; and in the case when anything is divided from it, and diverted in order to the cognition of temporal things; nevertheless on that side on which it beholds and consults truth, here also it is the image of God, but on that side whereby it is directed to the cognition of the lower things, it is not the image of God. And since it is so much the more formed after the image of God, the more it has extended itself to that which is eternal, and is on that account not to be restrained, so as to withhold and refrain itself from thence; therefore the man ought not to cover his head. But because too great a progression towards inferior things is dangerous to that rational cognition that is conversant with things corporeal and temporal; this ought to have power on its head, which the covering indicates, by which it is signified that it ought to be restrained. For a holy and pious meaning is pleasing to the holy angels. For God sees not after the way of time, neither does anything new take place in His vision and knowledge, when anything is done in time and transitorily, after the way in which such things affect the senses, whether the carnal senses of animals and men, or even the heavenly senses of the angels.

11. For that the Apostle Paul, when speaking outwardly of the sex of male and female, figured the mystery of some more hidden truth, may be understood from this, that when he says in another place that she is a widow indeed who is desolate, without children and nephews, and yet that she ought to trust in God, and to continue in prayers night and day, he here indicates, that the woman having been brought into the transgression by being deceived, is brought to salvation by child-bearing; and then he has added, "If they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety." As if it could possibly hurt a good widow, if either she had not sons, or if those whom she had did not choose to continue in good works. But because those things which are called good works are, as it were, the sons of our life, according to that sense of life in which it answers to the question, What is a man's life? that is, How does he act in these temporal things? which life the Greeks do not call *xoe* but *bios*; and because these good works are

chiefly performed in the way of offices of mercy, while works of mercy are of no profit, either to Pagans, or to Jews who do not believe in Christ, or to any heretics or schismatics whatsoever in whom faith and charity and sober holiness are not found: what the apostle meant to signify is plain, and in so far figuratively and mystically, because he was speaking of covering the head of the woman, which will remain mere empty words, unless referred to some hidden sacrament.

12. For, as not only most true reason but also the authority of the apostle himself declares, man was not made in the image of God according to the shape of his body, but according to his rational mind. For the thought is a debased and empty one, which holds God to be circumscribed and limited by the lineaments of bodily members. But further, does not the same blessed apostle say, “Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which is created after God;” and in another place more clearly, “Putting off the old man,” he says, “with his deeds; put on the new man, which is renewed to the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him?” If, then, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and he is the new man who is renewed to the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him; no one can doubt, that man was made after the image of Him that created him, not according to the body, nor indiscriminately according to any part of the mind, but according to the rational mind, wherein the knowledge of God can exist. And it is according to this renewal, also, that we are made sons of God by the baptism of Christ; and putting on the new man, certainly put on Christ through faith. Who is there, then, who will hold women to be alien from this fellowship, whereas they are fellow-heirs of grace with us; and whereas in another place the same apostle says, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ: there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus?” Pray, have faithful women then lost their bodily sex? But because they are there renewed after the image of God, where there is no sex; man is there made after the image of God, where there is no sex, that is, in the spirit of his mind. Why, then, is the man on that account not bound to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God, while the woman is bound to do so, because she is

the glory of the man; as though the woman were not renewed in the spirit of her mind, which spirit is renewed to the knowledge of God after the image of Him who created him? But because she differs from the man in bodily sex, it was possible rightly to represent under her bodily covering that part of the reason which is diverted to the government of temporal things; so that the image of God may remain on that side of the mind of man on which it cleaves to the beholding or the consulting of the eternal reasons of things; and this, it is clear, not men only, but also women have.

## CHAPTER 8

### TURNING ASIDE FROM THE IMAGE OF GOD

13. A common nature, therefore, is recognized in their minds, but in their bodies a division of that one mind itself is figured. As we ascend, then, by certain steps of thought within, along the succession of the parts of the mind, there where something first meets us which is not common to ourselves with the beasts reason begins, so that here the inner man can now be recognized. And if this inner man himself, through that reason to which the administering of things temporal has been delegated, slips on too far by over-much progress into outward things, that which is his head moreover consenting, that is, the (so to call it) masculine part which presides in the watch-tower of counsel not restraining or bridling it: then he waxeth old because of all his enemies, viz. the demons with their prince the devil, who are envious of virtue; and that vision of eternal things is withdrawn also from the head himself, eating with his spouse that which was forbidden, so that the light of his eyes is gone from him; and so both being naked from that enlightenment of truth, and with the eyes of their conscience opened to behold how they were left shameful and unseemly, like the leaves of sweet fruits, but without the fruits themselves, they so weave together good words without the fruit of good works, as while living wickedly to cover over their disgrace as it were by speaking well.

## CHAPTER 9

### THE SAME ARGUMENT IS CONTINUED



14. For the soul loving its own power, slips onwards from the whole which is common, to a part, which belongs especially to itself. And that apostatizing pride, which is called “the beginning of sin,” whereas it might have been most excellently governed by the laws of God, if it had followed Him as its ruler in the universal creature, by seeking something more than the whole, and struggling to govern this by a law of its own, is thrust on, since nothing is more than the whole, into caring for a part; and thus by lusting after something more, is made less; whence also covetousness is called “the root of all evil.” And it administers that whole, wherein it strives to do something of its own against the laws by which the whole is governed, by its own body, which it possesses only in part; and so being delighted by corporeal forms and motions, because it has not the things themselves within itself, and because it is wrapped up in their images, which it has fixed in the memory, and is foully polluted by fornication of the phantasy, while it refers all its functions to those ends, for which it curiously seeks corporeal and temporal things through the senses of the body, either it affects with swelling arrogance to be more excellent than other souls that are given up to the corporeal senses, or it is plunged into a foul whirlpool of carnal pleasure.

## CHAPTER 10

### THE LOWEST DEGRADATION REACHED BY DEGREES

15. When the soul then consults either for itself or for others with a good will towards perceiving the inner and higher things, such as are possessed in a chaste embrace, without any narrowness or envy, not individually, but in common by all who love such things; then even if it be deceived in anything, through ignorance of things temporal (for its action in this case is a temporal one), and if it does not hold fast to that mode of acting which it ought, the temptation is but one common to man. And it is a great thing so to pass through this life, on which we travel, as it were, like a road on our return home, that no temptation may take us, but what is common to man. For this is a sin, without the body, and must not be reckoned fornication, and on that account is very easily pardoned. But when the soul does anything in order to attain those things which are perceived through the body, through lust of proving or of surpassing or of handling them, in order

that it may place in them its final good, then whatever it does, it does wickedly, and commits fornication, sinning against its own body: and while snatching from within the deceitful images of corporeal things, and combining them by vain thought, so that nothing seems to it to be divine, unless it be of such a kind as this; by selfish greediness it is made fruitful in errors, and by selfish prodigality it is emptied of strength. Yet it would not leap on at once from the commencement to such shameless and miserable fornication, but, as it is written, “He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little.”

## CHAPTER 11

### THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST IN MAN

16. For as a snake does not creep on with open steps, but advances by the very minutest efforts of its several scales; so the slippery motion of falling away [from what is good] takes possession of the negligent only gradually, and beginning from a perverse desire for the likeness of God, arrives in the end at the likeness of beasts. Hence it is that being naked of their first garment, they earned by mortality coats of skins. For the true honor of man is the image and likeness of God, which is not preserved except it be in relation to Him by whom it is impressed. The less therefore that one loves what is one's own, the more one cleaves to God. But through the desire of making trial of his own power, man by his own bidding falls down to himself as to a sort of intermediate grade. And so, while he wishes to be as God is, that is, under no one, he is thrust on, even from his own middle grade, by way of punishment, to that which is lowest, that is, to those things in which beasts delight: and thus, while his honor is the likeness of God, but his dishonor is the likeness of the beast, “Man being in honor abideth not: he is compared to the beasts that are foolish, and is made like to them.” By what path, then, could he pass so great a distance from the highest to the lowest, except through his own intermediate grade? For when he neglects the love of wisdom, which remains always after the same fashion, and lusts after knowledge by experiment upon things temporal and mutable, that knowledge puffeth up, it does not edify: so the mind is overweighed and thrust out, as it were, by its own weight from blessedness; and learns by its own punishment, through that trial of its own intermediateness, what the

difference is between the good it has abandoned and the bad to which it has committed itself; and having thrown away and destroyed its strength, it cannot return, unless by the grace of its Maker calling it to repentance, and forgiving its sins. For who will deliver the unhappy soul from the body of this death, unless the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord? of which grace we will discourse in its place, so far as He Himself enables us.

## CHAPTER 12

THERE IS A KIND OF HIDDEN WEDLOCK IN THE INNER MAN. UNLAWFUL PLEASURES OF THE THOUGHTS

17. Let us now complete, so far as the Lord helps us, the discussion which we have undertaken, respecting that part of reason to which knowledge belongs, that is, the cognizance of things temporal and changeable, which is necessary for managing the affairs of this life. For as in the case of that visible wedlock of the two human beings who were made first, the serpent did not eat of the forbidden tree, but only persuaded them to eat of it; and the woman did not eat alone, but gave to her husband, and they eat together; although she alone spoke with the serpent, and she alone was led away by him: so also in the case of that hidden and secret kind of wedlock, which is transacted and discerned in a single human being, the carnal, or as I may say, since it is directed to the senses of the body, the sensuous movement of the soul, which is common to us with beasts, is shut off from the reason of wisdom. For certainly bodily things are perceived by the sense of the body; but spiritual things, which are eternal and unchangeable, are understood by the reason of wisdom. But the reason of knowledge has appetite very near to it: seeing that what is called the science or knowledge of actions reasons concerning the bodily things which are perceived by the bodily sense; if well, in order that it may refer that knowledge to the end of the chief good; but if ill, in order that it may enjoy them as being such good things as those wherein it reposes with a false blessedness. Whenever, then, that carnal or animal sense introduces into this purpose of the mind which is conversant about things temporal and corporeal, with a view to the offices of a man's actions, by the living force of reason, some inducement to enjoy itself, that is, to enjoy itself as if it were some private good of its own, not as the public and common, which is the unchangeable, good; then, as it were, the

serpent discourses with the woman. And to consent to this allurements, is to eat of the forbidden tree. But if that consent is satisfied by the pleasure of thought alone, but the members are so restrained by the authority of higher counsel that they are not yielded as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; this, I think, is to be considered as if the woman alone should have eaten the forbidden food. But if, in this consent to use wickedly the things which are perceived through the senses of the body, any sin at all is so determined upon, that if there is the power it is also fulfilled by the body; then that woman must be understood to have given the unlawful food to her husband with her, to be eaten together. For it is not possible for the mind to determine that a sin is not only to be thought of with pleasure, but also to be effectually committed, unless also that intention of the mind yields, and serves the bad action, with which rests the chief power of applying the members to an outward act, or of restraining them from one.

18. And yet, certainly, when the mind is pleased in thought alone with unlawful things, while not indeed determining that they are to be done, but yet holding and pondering gladly things which ought to have been rejected the very moment they touched the mind, it cannot be denied to be a sin, but far less than if it were also determined to accomplished it in outward act. And therefore pardon must be sought for such thoughts too, and the breast must be smitten, and it must be said, "Forgive us our debts;" and what follows must be done, and must be joined in our prayer, "As we also forgive our debtors." For it is not as it was with those two first human beings, of which each one bare his own person; and so, if the woman alone had eaten the forbidden food, she certainly alone would have been smitten with the punishment of death: it cannot, I say, be so said also in the case of a single human being now, that if the thought, remaining alone, be gladly fed with unlawful pleasures, from which it ought to turn away directly, while yet there is no determination that the bad actions are to be done, but only that they are retained with pleasure in remembrance, the woman as it were can be condemned without the man. Far be it from us to believe this. For here is one person, one human being, and he as a whole will be condemned, unless those things which, as lacking the will to do, and yet having the will to please the mind with them, are perceived to be sins of thought alone, are pardoned through the grace of the Mediator.

19. This reasoning, then, whereby we have sought in the mind of each several human being a certain rational wedlock of contemplation and action, with functions distributed through each severally, yet with the unity of the mind preserved in both; saving meanwhile the truth of that history which divine testimony hands down respecting the first two human beings, that is, the man and his wife, from whom the human species is propagated;—this reasoning, I say, must be listened to only thus far, that the apostle may be understood to have intended to signify something to be sought in one individual man, by assigning the image of God to the man only, and not also to the woman, although in the merely different sex of two human beings.

#### CHAPTER 13

THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO HAVE THOUGHT THAT THE MIND WAS SIGNIFIED BY THE MAN, THE BODILY SENSE BY THE WOMAN

20. Nor does it escape me, that some who before us were eminent defenders of the Catholic faith and expounders of the word of God, while they looked for these two things in one human being, whose entire soul they perceived to be a sort of excellent paradise, asserted that the man was the mind, but that the woman was the bodily sense. And according to this distribution, by which the man is assumed to be the mind, but the woman the bodily sense, all things seem aptly to agree together if they are handled with due attention: unless that it is written, that in all the beasts and flying things there was not found for man an helpmate like to himself; and then the woman was made out of his side. And on this account I, for my part, have not thought that the bodily sense should be taken for the woman, which we see to be common to ourselves and to the beasts; but I have desired to find something which the beasts had not; and I have rather thought the bodily sense should be understood to be the serpent, whom we read to have been more subtle than all beasts of the field. For in those natural good things which we see are common to ourselves and to the irrational animals, the sense excels by a kind of living power; not the sense of which it is written in the epistle addressed to the Hebrews, where we read, that “strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil;” for these “senses”

belong to the rational nature and pertain to the understanding; but that sense which is divided into five parts in the body, through which corporeal species and motion is perceived not only by ourselves, but also by the beasts.

21. But whether that the apostle calls the man the image and glory of God, but the woman the glory of the man, is to be received in this, or that, or in any other way; yet it is clear, that when we live according to God, our mind which is intent on the invisible things of Him ought to be fashioned with proficiency from His eternity, truth, charity; but that something of our own rational purpose, that is, of the same mind, must be directed to the using of changeable and corporeal things, without which this life does not go on; not that we may be conformed to this world, by placing our end in such good things, and by forcing the desire of blessedness towards them, but that whatever we do rationally in the using of temporal things, we may do it with the contemplation of attaining eternal things, passing through the former, but cleaving to the latter.

#### CHAPTER 14

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE. THE WORSHIP OF GOD IS THE LOVE OF HIM. HOW THE INTELLECTUAL COGNIZANCE OF ETERNAL THINGS COMES TO PASS THROUGH WISDOM

For knowledge also has its own good measure, if that in it which puffs up, or is wont to puff up, is conquered by love of eternal things, which does not puff up, but, as we know, edifieth. Certainly without knowledge the virtues themselves, by which one lives rightly, cannot be possessed, by which this miserable life may be so governed, that we may attain to that eternal life which is truly blessed.

22. Yet action, by which we use temporal things well, differs from contemplation of eternal things; and the latter is reckoned to wisdom, the former to knowledge. For although that which is wisdom can also be called knowledge, as the apostle too speaks, where he says, "Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known;" when doubtless he meant his words to be understood of the knowledge of the contemplation of God, which will be the highest reward of the saints; yet where he says, "For to

one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit," certainly he distinguishes without doubt these two things, although he does not there explain the difference, nor in what way one may be discerned from the other. But having examined a great number of passages from the Holy Scriptures, I find it written in the Book of Job, that holy man being the speaker, "Behold, piety, that is wisdom; but to depart from evil is knowledge." In thus distinguishing, it must be understood that wisdom belongs to contemplation, knowledge to action. For in this place he meant by piety the worship of God, which in Greek is called *theosebeia*. For the sentence in the Greek mss. has that word. And what is there in eternal things more excellent than God, of whom alone the nature is unchangeable? And what is the worship of Him except the love of Him, by which we now desire to see Him, and we believe and hope that we shall see Him; and in proportion as we make progress, see now through a glass in an enigma, but then in clearness? For this is what the Apostle Paul means by "face to face." This is also what John says, "Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Discourse about these and the like subjects seems to me to be the discourse itself of wisdom. But to depart from evil, which Job says is knowledge, is without doubt of temporal things. Since it is in reference to time [and this world] that we are in evil, from which we ought to abstain that we may come to those good eternal things. And therefore, whatsoever we do prudently, boldly, temperately, and justly, belongs to that knowledge or discipline wherewith our action is conversant in avoiding evil and desiring good; and so also, whatsoever we gather by the knowledge that comes from inquiry, in the way of examples either to be guarded against or to be imitated, and in the way of necessary proofs respecting any subject, accommodated to our use.

23. When a discourse then relates to these things, I hold it to be a discourse belonging to knowledge, and to be distinguished from a discourse belonging to wisdom, to which those things belong, which neither have been, nor shall be, but are; and on account of that eternity in which they are, are said to have been, and to be, and to be about to be, without any changeableness of times. For neither have they been in such way as that

they should cease to be, nor are they about to be in such way as if they were not now; but they have always had and always will have that very absolute being. And they abide, but not as if fixed in some place as are bodies; but as intelligible things in incorporeal nature, they are so at hand to the glance of the mind, as things visible or tangible in place are to the sense of the body. And not only in the case of sensible things posited in place, there abide also intelligible and incorporeal reasons of them apart from local space; but also of motions that pass by in successive times, apart from any transit in time, there stand also like reasons, themselves certainly intelligible, and not sensible. And to attain to these with the eye of the mind is the lot of few; and when they are attained as much as they can be, he himself who attains to them does not abide in them, but is as it were repelled by the rebounding of the eye itself of the mind, and so there comes to be a transitory thought of a thing not transitory. And yet this transient thought is committed to the memory through the instructions by which the mind is taught; that the mind which is compelled to pass from thence, may be able to return thither again; although, if the thought should not return to the memory and find there what it had committed to it, it would be led thereto like an uninstructed person, as it had been led before, and would find it where it had first found it, that is to say, in that incorporeal truth, whence yet once more it may be as it were written down and fixed in the mind. For the thought of man, for example, does not so abide in that incorporeal and unchangeable reason of a square body, as that reason itself abides: if, to be sure, it could attain to it at all without the phantasy of local space. Or if one were to apprehend the rhythm of any artificial or musical sound, passing through certain intervals of time, as it rested without time in some secret and deep silence, it could at least be thought as long as that song could be heard; yet what the glance of the mind, transient though it was, caught from thence, and, absorbing as it were into a belly, so laid up in the memory, over this it will be able to ruminate in some measure by recollection, and to transfer what it has thus learned into systematic knowledge. But if this has been blotted out by absolute forgetfulness, yet once again, under the guidance of teaching, one will come to that which had altogether dropped away, and it will be found such as it was.



## CHAPTER 15

IN OPPOSITION TO THE REMINISCENCE OF PLATO AND PYTHAGORAS. PYTHAGORAS THE SAMIAN. OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE, AND OF SEEKING THE TRINITY IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF TEMPORAL THINGS

24. And hence that noble philosopher Plato endeavored to persuade us that the souls of men lived even before they bare these bodies; and that hence those things which are learnt are rather remembered, as having been known already, than taken into knowledge as things new. For he has told us that a boy, when questioned I know not what respecting geometry, replied as if he were perfectly skilled in that branch of learning. For being questioned step by step and skillfully, he saw what was to be seen, and said that which he saw. But if this had been a recollecting of things previously known, then certainly every one, or almost every one, would not have been able so to answer when questioned. For not every one was a geometrician in the former life, since geometricians are so few among men that scarcely one can be found anywhere. But we ought rather to believe, that the intellectual mind is so formed in its nature as to see those things, which by the disposition of the Creator are subjoined to things intelligible in a natural order, by a sort of incorporeal light of an unique kind; as the eye of the flesh sees things adjacent to itself in this bodily light, of which light it is made to be receptive, and adapted to it. For none the more does this fleshly eye, too, distinguish black things from white without a teacher, because it had already known them before it was created in this flesh. Why, lastly, is it possible only in intelligible things that any one properly questioned should answer according to any branch of learning, although ignorant of it? Why can no one do this with things sensible, except those which he has seen in this his present body, or has believed the information of others who knew them, whether somebody's writings or words? For we must not acquiesce in their story, who assert that the Samian Pythagoras recollected some things of this kind, which he had experienced when he was previously here in another body; and others tell yet of others, that they experienced something of the same sort in their minds: but it may be conjectured that these were untrue recollections, such as we commonly experience in sleep, when we fancy we remember, as though we had done or seen it, what we never did or saw at all; and that the minds of these persons, even though awake, were

affected in this way at the suggestion of malignant and deceitful spirits, whose care it is to confirm or to sow some false belief concerning the changes of souls, in order to deceive men. This, I say, may be conjectured from this, that if they really remembered those things which they had seen here before, while occupying other bodies, the same thing would happen to many, nay to almost all; since they suppose that as the dead from the living, so, without cessation and continually, the living are coming into existence from the dead; as sleepers from those that are awake, and those that are awake from them that sleep.

25. If therefore this is the right distinction between wisdom and knowledge, that the intellectual cognizance of eternal things belongs to wisdom, but the rational cognizance of temporal things to knowledge, it is not difficult to judge which is to be preferred or postponed to which. But if we must employ some other distinction by which to know these two apart, which without doubt the apostle teaches us are different, saying, “To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit:” still the difference between those two which we have laid down is a most evident one, in that the intellectual cognizance of eternal things is one thing, the rational cognizance of temporal things another; and no one doubts but that the former is to be preferred to the latter. As then we leave behind those things which belong to the outer man, and desire to ascend within from those things which we have in common with beasts, before we come to the cognizance of things intelligible and supreme, which are eternal, the rational cognizance of temporal things presents itself. Let us then find a trinity in this also, if we can, as we found one in the senses of the body, and in those things which through them entered in the way of images into our soul or spirit; so that instead of corporeal things which we touch by corporeal sense, placed as they are without us, we might have resemblances of bodies impressed within on the memory from which thought might be formed, while the will as a third united them; just as the sight of the eyes was formed from without, which the will applied to the visible thing in order to produce vision, and united both, while itself also added itself thereto as a third. But this subject must not be compressed into this book; so that in that which follows, if God help, it may be suitably examined, and the conclusions to which we come may be unfolded.

## Book XIII

The inquiry is prosecuted respecting knowledge, in which, as distinguished from wisdom, Augustin had begun in the former book to look for a kind of trinity. And occasion is taken of commending Christian faith, and of explaining how the faith of believers is one and common. Next, that all desire blessedness, yet that all have not the faith whereby we arrive at blessedness; and that this faith is defined in Christ, who in the flesh rose from the dead; and that no one is set free from the dominion of the devil through forgiveness of sins, save through Him. It is shown also at length that it was needful that the devil should be conquered by Christ, not by power, but by righteousness. Finally, that when the words of this faith are committed to memory, there is in the mind a kind of trinity, since there are, first, in the memory the sounds of the words, and this even when the man is not thinking of them; and next, the mind's eye of his recollection is formed thereupon when he thinks of them; and, lastly, the will, when he so thinks and remembers, combines both.

### CHAPTER 1

THE ATTEMPT IS MADE TO DISTINGUISH OUT OF THE SCRIPTURES THE OFFICES OF WISDOM AND OF KNOWLEDGE. THAT IN THE BEGINNING OF JOHN SOME THINGS THAT ARE SAID BELONG TO WISDOM, SOME TO KNOWLEDGE. SOME THINGS THERE ARE ONLY KNOWN BY THE HELP OF FAITH. HOW WE SEE THE FAITH THAT IS IN US. IN THE SAME NARRATIVE OF JOHN, SOME THINGS ARE KNOWN BY THE SENSE OF THE BODY, OTHERS ONLY BY THE REASON OF THE MIND

1. In the book before this, viz. the twelfth of this work, we have done enough to distinguish the office of the rational mind in temporal things, wherein not only our knowing but our action is concerned, from the more excellent office of the same mind, which is employed in contemplating eternal things, and is limited to knowing alone. But I think it more

convenient that I should insert somewhat out of the Holy Scriptures, by which the two may more easily be distinguished.

2. John the Evangelist has thus begun his Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without was Him not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.” This entire passage, which I have here taken from the Gospel, contains in its earlier portions what is immutable and eternal, the contemplation of which makes us blessed; but in those which follow, eternal things are mentioned in conjunction with temporal things. And hence some things there belong to knowledge, some to wisdom, according to our previous distinction in the twelfth book. For the words,—”In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not:”—require a contemplative life, and must be discerned by the intellectual mind; and the more any one has profited in this, the wiser without doubt will he become. But on account of the verse, “The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not,” faith certainly was necessary, whereby that which was not seen might be believed. For by “darkness” he intended to signify the hearts of mortals turned away from light of this kind, and hardly able to behold it; for which

reason he subjoins, “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe.” But here we come to a thing that was done in time, and belongs to knowledge, which is comprised in the cognizance of facts. And we think of the man John under that phantasy which is impressed on our memory from the notion of human nature. And whether men believe or not, they think this in the same manner. For both alike know what man is, the outer part of whom, that is, his body, they have learned through the eyes of the body; but of the inner, that is, the soul, they possess the knowledge in themselves, because they also themselves are men, and through intercourse with men; so that they are able to think what is said, “There was a man, whose name was John,” because they know the names also by interchange of speech. But that which is there also, viz. “sent from God,” they who hold at all, hold by faith; and they who do not hold it by faith, either hesitate through doubt, or deride it through unbelief. Yet both, if they are not in the number of those over-foolish ones, who say in their heart “There is no God,” when they hear these words, think both things, viz. both what God is, and what it is to be sent from God; and if they do not do this as the things themselves really are, they do it at any rate as they can.

3. Further, we know from other sources the faith itself which a man sees to be in his own heart, if he believes, or not to be there, if he does not believe: but not as we know bodies, which we see with the bodily eyes, and think of even when absent through the images of themselves which we retain in memory; nor yet as those things which we have not seen, and which we frame howsoever we can in thought from those which we have seen, and commit them to memory, that we may recur to them when we will, in order that therein we may similarly by recollection discern them, or rather discern the images of them, of what sort soever these are which we have fixed there; nor again as a living man, whose soul we do not indeed see, but conjecture from our own, and from corporeal motions gaze also in thought upon the living man, as we have learnt him by sight. Faith as not so seen in the heart in which it is, by him whose it is; but most certain knowledge holds it fast, and conscience proclaims it. Although therefore we are bidden to believe on this account, because we cannot see what we are bidden to

believe; nevertheless we see faith itself in ourselves, when that faith is in us; because faith even in absent things is present, and faith in things which are without us is within, and faith in things which are not seen is itself seen, and itself none the less comes into the hearts of men in time; and if any cease to be faithful and become unbelievers, then it perishes from them. And sometimes faith is accommodated even to falsehoods; for we sometimes so speak as to say, I put faith in him, and he deceived me. And this kind of faith, if indeed it too is to be called faith, perishes from the heart without blame, when truth is found and expels it. But faith in things that are true, passes, as one should wish it to pass, into the things themselves. For we must not say that faith perishes, when those things which were believed are seen. For is it indeed still to be called faith, when faith, according to the definition in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is the evidence of things not seen?

4. In the words which follow next, “The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe;” the action, as we have said, is one done in time. For to bear witness even to that which is eternal, as is that light that is intelligible, is a thing done in time. And of this it was that John came to bear witness who “was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.” For he adds “That was the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” Now they who know the Latin language, understand all these words, from those things which they know: and of these, some have become known to us through the senses of the body, as man, as the world itself, of which the greatness is so evident to our sight; as again the sounds of the words themselves, for hearing also is a sense of the body; and some through the reason of the mind, as that which is said, “And His own received Him not;” for this means, that they did not believe in Him; and what belief is, we do not know by any sense of the body, but by the reason of the mind. We have learned, too, not the sounds, but the meanings of the words themselves, partly through the sense of the body, partly through the reason of the mind. Nor have we now heard those words for the first time, but they are words we had heard before. And we were retaining in our memory as things known, and we here recognized, not

only the words themselves, but also what they meant. For when the bisyllabic word *mundus* is uttered, then something that is certainly corporeal, for it is a sound, has become known through the body, that is, through the ear. But that which it means also, has become known through the body, that is, through the eyes of the flesh. For so far as the world is known to us at all, it is known through sight. But the quadri-syllabic word *crediderunt* reaches us, so far as its sound, since that is a corporeal thing, through the ear of the flesh; but its meaning is discoverable by no sense of the body, but by the reason of the mind. For unless we knew through the mind what the word *crediderunt* meant, we should not understand what they did not do, of whom it is said, “And His own received Him not.” The sound then of the word rings upon the ears of the body from without, and reaches the sense which is called hearing. The species also of man is both known to us in ourselves, and is presented to the senses of the body from without, in other men; to the eyes, when it is seen; to the ears, when it is heard; to the touch, when it is held and touched; and it has, too, its image in our memory, incorporeal indeed, but like the body. Lastly, the wonderful beauty of the world itself is at hand from without, both to our gaze, and to that sense which is called touch, if we come in contact with any of it: and this also has its image within in our memory, to which we revert, when we think of it either in the enclosure of a room, or again in darkness. But we have already sufficiently spoken in the eleventh book of these images of corporeal things; incorporeal indeed, yet having the likeness of bodies, and belonging to the life of the outer man. But we are treating now of the inner man, and of his knowledge, namely, that knowledge which is of things temporal and changeable; into the purpose and scope of which, when anything is assumed, even of things belonging to the outer man, it must be assumed for this end, that something may thence be taught which may help rational knowledge. And hence the rational use of those things which we have in common with irrational animals belongs to the inner man; neither can it rightly be said that this is common to us with the irrational animals.

## CHAPTER 2

FAITH A THING OF THE HEART, NOT OF THE BODY; HOW IT IS COMMON AND ONE AND THE SAME IN ALL BELIEVERS. THE FAITH OF BELIEVERS IS ONE, NO OTHERWISE THAN THE WILL OF THOSE WHO WILL IS ONE

5. But faith, of which we are compelled, by reason of the arrangement of our subject, to dispute somewhat more at length in this book: faith I say, which they who have are called the faithful, and they who have not, unbelievers, as were those who did not receive the Son of God coming to His own; although it is wrought in us by hearing, yet does not belong to that sense of the body which is called hearing, since it is not a sound; nor to the eyes of this our flesh, since it is neither color nor bodily form; nor to that which is called touch, since it has nothing of bulk; nor to any sense of the body at all, since it is a thing of the heart, not of the body; nor is it without apart from us, but deeply seated within us; nor does any man see it in another, but each one in himself. Lastly, it is a thing that can both be feigned by pretence, and be thought to be in him in whom it is not. Therefore every one sees his own faith in himself; but does not see, but believes, that it is in another; and believes this the more firmly, the more he knows the fruits of it, which faith is wont to work by love. And therefore this faith is common to all of whom the evangelist subjoins, “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;” common I say, not as any form of a bodily object is common, as regards sight, to the eyes of all to whom it is present, for in some way the gaze of all that behold it is informed by the same one form; but as the human countenance can be said to be common to all men; for this is so said that yet each certainly has his own. We say certainly with perfect truth, that the faith of believers is impressed from one doctrine upon the heart of each several person who believes the same thing. But that which is believed is a different thing from the faith by which it is believed. For the former is in things which are said either to be, or to have been or to be about to be; but the latter is in the mind of the believer, and is visible to him only whose it is; although not indeed itself but a faith like it, is also in others. For it is not one in number, but in kind; yet on account of the likeness, and the absence of all difference, we rather call it one than many. For when, too, we see two men exceedingly alike, we wonder, and say that both have one countenance. It is therefore more easily said that the souls were many,—a several soul, of course, for each several person—of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that they were of one soul,—than it is, where the apostle speaks of “one faith,”



for any one to venture to say that there are as many faiths as there are faithful. And yet He who says, "O woman, great is thy faith;" and to another, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" intimates that each has his own faith. But the like faith of believers is said to be one, in the same way as a like will of those who will is said to be one; since in the case also of those who have the same will, the will of each is visible to himself, but that of the other is not visible, although he wills the same thing; and if it intimate itself by any signs, it is believed rather than seen. But each being conscious of his own mind certainly does not believe, but manifestly sees outright, that this is his own will.

### CHAPTER 3

SOME DESIRES BEING THE SAME IN ALL, ARE KNOWN TO EACH. THE POET ENNIUS

6. There is, indeed, so closely conspiring a harmony in the same nature living and using reason, that although one knows not what the other wills, yet there are some wills of all which are also known to each; and although each man does not know what any other one man wills, yet in some things he may know what all will. And hence comes that story of the comic actor's witty joke, who promised that he would say in the theatre, in some other play, what all had in their minds, and what all willed; and when a still greater crowd had come together on the day appointed, with great expectation, all being in suspense and silent, is affirmed to have said: You will to buy cheap, and sell dear. And mean actor though he was, yet all in his words recognized what themselves were conscious of, and applauded him with wonderful goodwill, for saying before the eyes of all what was confessedly true, yet what no one looked for. And why was so great expectation raised by his promising that he would say what was the will of all, unless because no man knows the wills of other men? But did not he know that will? Is there any one who does not know it? Yet why, unless because there are some things which not unfitly each conjectures from himself to be in others, through sympathy or agreement either in vice or virtue? But it is one thing to see one's own will; another to conjecture, however certainly, what is another's. For, in human affairs, I am as certain that Rome was built as that Constantinople was, although I have seen Rome with my eyes, but know nothing of the other city, except what I have

believed on the testimony of others. And truly that comic actor believed it to be common to all to will to buy cheap and sell dear, either by observing himself or by making experiment also of others. But since such a will is in truth a fault, every one can attain the counter virtue, or run into the mischief of some other fault which is contrary to it, whereby to resist and conquer it. For I myself know a case where a manuscript was offered to a man for purchase, who perceived that the vendor was ignorant of its value, and was therefore asking something very small, and who thereupon gave him, though not expecting it, the just price, which was much more. Suppose even the case of a man possessed with wickedness so great as to sell cheap what his parents left to him, and to buy dear, in order to waste it on his own lusts? Such wanton extravagance, I fancy, is not incredible; and if such men are sought, they may be found, or even fall in one's way although not sought; who, by a wickedness more than that of the theatre, make a mock of the theatrical proposition or declaration, by buying dishonor at a great price, while selling lands at a small one. We have heard, too, of persons that, for the sake of distribution, have bought corn at a higher price, and sold it to their fellow-citizens at a lower one. And note also what the old poet Ennius has said: that "all mortals wish themselves to be praised;" wherein, doubtless, he conjectured what was in others, both by himself, and by those whom he knew by experience; and so seems to have declared what it is that all men will. Lastly, if that comic actor himself, too, had said, You all will to be praised, no one of you wills to be abused; he would have seemed in like manner to have expressed what all will. Yet there are some who hate their own faults, and do not desire to be praised by others for that for which they are displeased with themselves; and who thank the kindness of those who rebuke them, when the purpose of that rebuke is their own amendment. But if he had said, You all will to be blessed, you do not will to be wretched; he would have said something which there is no one that would not recognize in his own will. For whatever else a man may will secretly, he does not withdraw from that will, which is well known to all men, and well known to be in all men.

## CHAPTER 4

THE WILL TO POSSESS BLESSEDNESS IS ONE IN ALL, BUT THE VARIETY OF WILLS IS VERY GREAT CONCERNING THAT BLESSEDNESS ITSELF

7. It is wonderful, however, since the will to obtain and retain blessedness is one in all, whence comes, on the other hand, such a variety and diversity of wills concerning that blessedness itself; not that any one is unwilling to have it, but that all do not know it. For if all knew it, it would not be thought by some to be in goodness of mind; by others, in pleasure of body; by others, in both; and by some in one thing, by others in another. For as men find special delight in this thing or that, so have they placed in it their idea of a blessed life. How, then, do all love so warmly what not all know? Who can love what he does not know?—a subject which I have already discussed in the preceding books. Why, therefore, is blessedness loved by all, when it is not known by all? Is it perhaps that all know what it is itself, but all do not know where it is to be found, and that the dispute arises from this?—as if, forsooth, the business was about some place in this world, where every one ought to will to live who wills to live blessedly; and as if the question where blessedness is were not implied in the question what it is. For certainly, if it is in the pleasure of the body, he is blessed who enjoys the pleasure of the body; if in goodness of mind, he has it who enjoys this; if in both, he who enjoys both. When, therefore, one says, to live blessedly is to enjoy the pleasure of the body; but another, to live blessedly is to enjoy goodness of mind; is it not, that either both know, or both do not know, what a blessed life is? How, then, do both love it, if no one can love what he does not know? Or is that perhaps false which we have assumed to be most true and most certain, viz. that all men will to live blessedly? For if to live blessedly is, for argument's sake, to live according to goodness of mind, how does he will to live blessedly who does not will this? Should we not say more truly, That man does not will to live blessedly, because he does not wish to live according to goodness, which alone is to live blessedly? Therefore all men do not will to live blessedly; on the contrary, few wish it; if to live blessedly is nothing else but to live according to goodness of mind, which many do not will to do. Shall we, then, hold that to be false of which the Academic Cicero himself did not doubt (although Academics doubt every thing), who, when he wanted in the dialogue Hortensius to find some

certain thing, of which no one doubted, from which to start his argument, says, We certainly all will to be blessed? Far be it from me to say this is false. But what then? Are we to say that, although there is no other way of living blessedly than living according to goodness of mind, yet even he who does not will this, wills to live blessedly? This, indeed, seems too absurd. For it is much as if we should say, Even he who does not will to live blessedly, wills to live blessedly. Who could listen to, who could endure, such a contradiction? And yet necessity thrusts us into this strait, if it is both true that all will to live blessedly, and yet all do not will to live in that way in which alone one can live blessedly.

## CHAPTER 5

### OF THE SAME THING

8. Or is, perhaps, the deliverance from our difficulties to be found in this, that, since we have said that every one places his idea of a blessed life in that which has most pleased him, as pleasure pleased Epicurus, and goodness Zeno, and something else pleased other people, we say that to live blessedly is nothing else but to live according to one's own pleasure: so that it is not false that all will to live blessedly, because all will that which pleases each? For if this, too, had been proclaimed to the people in the theatre, all would have found it in their own wills. But when Cicero, too, had propounded this in opposition to himself, he so refuted it as to make them blush who thought so. For he says: "But, behold! people who are not indeed philosophers, but who yet are prompt to dispute, say that all are blessed, whoever live as they will;" which is what we mean by, as pleases each. But by and by he has subjoined: "But this is indeed false. For to will what is not fitting, is itself most miserable; neither is it so miserable not to obtain what one wills, as to will to obtain what one ought not." Most excellently and altogether most truly does he speak. For who can be so blind in his mind, so alienated from all light of decency, and wrapped up in the darkness of indecency, as to call him blessed, because he lives as he will, who lives wickedly and disgracefully; and with no one restraining him, no one punishing, and no one daring even to blame him, nay more, too, with most people praising him, since, as divine Scripture says, "The wicked is praised in his heart's desire: and he who works iniquity is blessed,"

gratifies all his most criminal and flagitious desires; when, doubtless, although even so he would be wretched, yet he would be less wretched, if he could have had nothing of those things which he had wrongly willed? For every one is made wretched by a wicked will also, even though it stop short with will but more wretched by the power by which the longing of a wicked will is fulfilled. And, therefore, since it is true that all men will to be blessed, and that they seek for this one thing with the most ardent love, and on account of this seek everything which they do seek; nor can any one love that of which he does not know at all what or of what sort it is, nor can be ignorant what that is which he knows that he wills; it follows that all know a blessed life. But all that are blessed have what they will, although not all who have what they will are forewith blessed. But they are forewith wretched, who either have not what they will, or have that which they do not rightly will. Therefore he only is a blessed man, who both has all things which he wills, and wills nothing ill.

## CHAPTER 6

WHY, WHEN ALL WILL TO BE BLESSED, THAT IS RATHER CHOSEN BY WHICH ONE WITHDRAWS FROM BEING SO

9. Since, then, a blessed life consists of these two things, and is known to all, and dear to all; what can we think to be the cause why, when they cannot have both, men choose, out of these two, to have all things that they will, rather than to will all things well, even although they do not have them? Is it the depravity itself of the human race, in such wise that, while they are not unaware that neither is he blessed who has not what he wills, nor he who has what he wills wrongly, but he who both has whatsoever good things he wills, and wills no evil ones, yet, when both are not granted of those two things in which the blessed life consists, that is rather chosen by which one is withdrawn the more from a blessed life (since he certainly is further from it who obtains things which he wickedly desired, than he who only does not obtain the things which he desired); whereas the good will ought rather to be chosen, and to be preferred, even if it do not obtain the things which it seeks? For he comes near to being a blessed man, who wills well whatsoever he wills, and wills things, which when he obtains, he will be blessed. And certainly not bad things, but good, make men blessed,

when they do so make them. And of good things he already has something, and that, too, a something not to be lightly esteemed,—namely, the very good will itself; who longs to rejoice in those good things of which human nature is capable, and not in the performance or the attainment of any evil; and who follows diligently, and attains as much as he can, with a prudent, temperate, courageous, and right mind, such good things as are possible in the present miserable life; so as to be good even in evils, and when all evils have been put an end to, and all good things fulfilled, then to be blessed.

## CHAPTER 7

FAITH IS NECESSARY, THAT MAN MAY AT SOME TIME BE BLESSED, WHICH HE WILL ONLY ATTAIN IN THE FUTURE LIFE. THE BLESSEDNESS OF PROUD PHILOSOPHERS RIDICULOUS AND PITIABLE

10. And on this account, faith, by which men believe in God, is above all things necessary in this mortal life, most full as it is of errors and hardships. For there are no good things whatever, and above all, not those by which any one is made good, or those by which he will become blessed, of which any other source can be found whence they come to man, and are added to man, unless it be from God. But when he who is good and faithful in these miseries shall have come from this life to the blessed life, then will truly come to pass what now is absolutely impossible,—namely, that a man may live as he will. For he will not will to live badly in the midst of that felicity, nor will he will anything that will be wanting, nor will there be wanting anything which he shall have willed. Whatever shall be loved, will be present; nor will that be longed for, which shall not be present. Everything which will be there will be good, and the supreme God will be the supreme good and will be present for those to enjoy who love Him; and what altogether is most blessed, it will be certain that it will be so forever. But now, indeed, philosophers have made for themselves, according to the pleasure of each, their own ideals of a blessed life; that they might be able, as it were by their own power, to do that, which by the common conditions of mortals they were not able to do,—namely, to live as they would. For they felt that no one could be blessed otherwise than by having what he would, and by suffering nothing which he would not. And who would not will, that the life whatsoever it be, with which he is delighted, and which he

therefore calls blessed, were so in his own power, that he could have it continually? And yet who is in this condition? Who wills to suffer troubles in order that he may endure them manfully, although he both wills and is able to endure them if he does suffer them? Who would will to live in torments, even although he is able to live laudably by holding fast to righteousness in the midst of them through patience? They who have endured these evils, either in wishing to have or in fearing to lose what they loved, whether wickedly or laudably, have thought of them as transitory. For many have stretched boldly through transitory evils to good things which will last. And these, doubtless, are blessed through hope, even while actually suffering such transitory evils, through which they arrive at good things which will not be transitory. But he who is blessed through hope is not yet blessed: for he expects, through patience, a blessedness which he does not yet grasp. Whereas he, on the other hand, who is tormented without any such hope, without any such reward, let him use as much endurance as he pleases, is not truly blessed, but bravely miserable. For he is not on that account not miserable, because he would be more so if he also bore misery impatiently. Further, even if he does not suffer those things which he would not will to suffer in his own body, not even then is he to be esteemed blessed, inasmuch as he does not live as he wills. For to omit other things, which, while the body remains unhurt, belong to those annoyances of the mind, without which we should will to live, and which are innumerable; he would will, at any rate, if he were able, so to have his body safe and sound, and so to suffer no inconveniences from it, as to have it within his own control, or even to have it with an imperishableness of the body itself; and because he does not possess this, and hangs in doubt about it, he certainly does not live as he wills. For although he may be ready from fortitude to accept, and bear with an equal mind, whatever adversities may happen to him, yet he had rather they should not happen, and prevents them if he is able; and he is in such way ready for both alternatives, that, as much as is in him, he wishes for the one and shuns the other; and if he have fallen into that which he shuns, he therefore bears it willingly, because that could not happen which he willed. He bears it, therefore, in order that he may not be crushed; but he would not willingly be even burdened. How, then, does he live as he wills? Is it because he is willingly strong to bear what he would not will to be put upon him? Then he only wills what he can, because

he cannot have what he wills. And here is the sum-total of the blessedness of proud mortals, I know not whether to be laughed at, or not rather to be pitied, who boast that they live as they will, because they willingly bear patiently what they are unwilling should happen to them. For this, they say, is like Terence's wise saying,—

“Since that cannot be which you will, will that which thou canst.”

That this is aptly said, who denies? But it is advice given to the miserable man, that he may not be more miserable. And it is not rightly or truly said to the blessed man, such as all wish themselves to be, That cannot be which you will. For if he is blessed, whatever he wills can be; since he does not will that which cannot be. But such a life is not for this mortal state, neither will it come to pass unless when immortality also shall come to pass. And if this could not be given at all to man, blessedness too would be sought in vain, since it cannot be without immortality.

## CHAPTER 8

### BLESSEDNESS CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT IMMORTALITY

11. As, therefore, all men will to be blessed, certainly, if they will truly, they will also to be immortal; for otherwise they could not be blessed. And further, if questioned also concerning immortality, as before concerning blessedness, all reply that they will it. But blessedness of what quality soever, such as is not so, but rather is so called, is sought, nay indeed is feigned in this life, whilst immortality is despaired of, without which true blessedness cannot be. Since he lives blessedly, as we have already said before, and have sufficiently proved and concluded, who lives as he wills, and wills nothing wrongly. But no one wrongly wills immortality, if human nature is by God's gift capable of it; and if it is not capable of it, it is not capable of blessedness. For, that a man may live blessedly, he must needs live. And if life quits him by his dying, how can a blessed life remain with him? And when it quits him, without doubt it either quits him unwilling, or willing, or neither. If unwilling, how is the life blessed which is so within his will as not to be within his power? And whereas no one is blessed who wills something that he does not have, how much less is he blessed who is



quitted against his will, not by honor, nor by possessions, nor by any other thing, but by the blessed life itself, since he will have no life at all? And hence, although no feeling is left for his life to be thereby miserable (for the blessed life quits him, because life altogether quits him), yet he is wretched as long as he feels, because he knows that against his will that is being destroyed for the sake of which he loves all else, and which he loves beyond all else. A life therefore cannot both be blessed, and yet quit a man against his will, since no one becomes blessed against his will; and hence how much more does it make a man miserable by quitting him against his will, when it would make him miserable if he had it against his will! But if it quit him with his will, even so how was that a blessed life, which he who had it willed should perish? It remains then for them to say, that neither of these is in the mind of the blessed man; that is, that he is neither unwilling nor willing to be quitted by a blessed life, when through death life quits him altogether; for that he stands firm with an even heart, prepared alike for either alternative. But neither is that a blessed life which is such as to be unworthy of his love whom it makes blessed. For how is that a blessed life which the blessed man does not love? Or how is that loved, of which it is received indifferently, whether it is to flourish or to perish? Unless perhaps the virtues, which we love in this way on account of blessedness alone, venture to persuade us that we do not love blessedness itself. Yet if they did this, we should certainly leave off loving the virtues themselves, when we do not love that on account of which alone we loved them. And further, how will that opinion be true, which has been so tried, and sifted, and thoroughly strained, and is so certain, viz. that all men will to be blessed, if they themselves who are already blessed neither will nor do not will to be blessed? Or if they will it, as truth proclaims, as nature constrains, in which indeed the supremely good and unchangeably blessed Creator has implanted that will: if, I say, they will to be blessed who are blessed, certainly they do not will to be not blessed. But if they do not will not to be blessed, without doubt they do not will to be annihilated and perish in regard to their blessedness. But they cannot be blessed except they are alive; therefore they do not will so to perish in regard to their life. Therefore, whoever are either truly blessed or desire to be so, will to be immortal. But he does not live blessedly who has not that which he wills.

Therefore it follows that in no way can life be truly blessed unless it be eternal.

## CHAPTER 9

WE SAY THAT FUTURE BLESSEDNESS IS TRULY ETERNAL, NOT THROUGH HUMAN REASONINGS, BUT BY THE HELP OF FAITH. THE IMMORTALITY OF BLESSEDNESS BECOMES CREDIBLE FROM THE INCARNATION OF THE SON OF GOD

12. Whether human nature can receive this, which yet it confesses to be desirable, is no small question. But if faith be present, which is in those to whom Jesus has given power to become the sons of God, then there is no question. Assuredly, of those who endeavor to discover it from human reasonings, scarcely a few, and they endued with great abilities, and abounding in leisure, and learned with the most subtle learning, have been able to attain to the investigation of the immortality of the soul alone. And even for the soul they have not found a blessed life that is stable, that is, true; since they have said that it returns to the miseries of this life even after blessedness. And they among them who are ashamed of this opinion, and have thought that the purified soul is to be placed in eternal happiness without a body, hold such opinions concerning the past eternity of the world, as to confute this opinion of theirs concerning the soul; a thing which here it is too long to demonstrate; but it has been, as I think, sufficiently explained by us in the twelfth book of the City of God. But that faith promises, not by human reasoning, but by divine authority, that the whole man, who certainly consists of soul and body, shall be immortal, and on this account truly blessed. And so, when it had been said in the Gospel, that Jesus has given “power to become the sons of God to them who received Him;” and what it is to have received Him had been shortly explained by saying, “To them that believe on His name;” and it was further added in what way they are to become sons of God, viz., “Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;”—lest that infirmity of men which we all see and bear should despair of attaining so great excellence, it is added in the same place, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;” that, on the contrary, men might be convinced of that which seemed incredible. For if He who is by nature the Son of God was made the Son of man through mercy for the sake

of the sons of men,—for this is what is meant by “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” men,—how much more credible is it that the sons of men by nature should be made the sons of God by the grace of God, and should dwell in God, in whom alone and from whom alone the blessed can be made partakers of that immortality; of which that we might be convinced, the Son of God was made partaker of our mortality?

#### CHAPTER 10

THERE WAS NO OTHER MORE SUITABLE WAY OF FREEING MAN FROM THE MISERY OF MORTALITY THAN THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD. THE MERITS WHICH ARE CALLED OURS ARE THE GIFTS OF GOD

13. Those then who say, What, had God no other way by which He might free men from the misery of this mortality, that He should will the only-begotten Son, God co-eternal with Himself, to become man, by putting on a human soul and flesh, and being made mortal to endure death?—these, I say, it is not enough so to refute, as to assert that that mode by which God deigns to free us through the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, is good and suitable to the dignity of God; but we must show also, not indeed that no other mode was possible to God, to whose power all things are equally subject, but that there neither was nor need have been any other mode more appropriate for curing our misery. For what was so necessary for the building up of our hope, and for the freeing the minds of mortals cast down by the condition of mortality itself, from despair of immortality, than that it should be demonstrated to us at how great a price God rated us, and how greatly He loved us? But what is more manifest and evident in this so great proof hereof, than that the Son of God, unchangeably good, remaining what He was in Himself, and receiving from us and for us what He was not, apart from any loss of His own nature, and deigning to enter into the fellowship of ours, should first, without any evil desert of His own, bear our evils; and so with unobligated munificence should bestow His own gifts upon us, who now believe how much God loves us, and who now hope that of which we used to despair, without any good deserts of our own, nay, with our evil deserts too going before?

14. Since those also which are called our deserts, are His gifts. For, that faith may work by love, “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the

Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” And He was then given, when Jesus was glorified by the resurrection. For then He promised that He Himself would send Him, and He sent Him; because then, as it was written and foretold of Him, “He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” These gifts constitute our deserts, by which we arrive at the chief good of an immortal blessedness. “But God,” says the apostle, “commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” To this he goes on to add, “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” Those whom he first calls sinners he afterwards calls the enemies of God; and those whom he first speaks of as justified by His blood, he afterwards speaks of as reconciled by the death of the Son of God; and those whom he speaks of first as saved from wrath through Him, he afterwards speaks of as saved by His life. We were not, therefore, before that grace merely anyhow sinners, but in such sins that we were enemies of God. But the same apostle calls us above several times by two appellations, viz. sinners and enemies of God,—one as if the most mild, the other plainly the most harsh,—saying, “For if when we were yet weak, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Those whom he called weak, the same he called ungodly. Weakness seems something slight; but sometimes it is such as to be called impiety. Yet except it were weakness, it would not need a physician, who is in the Hebrew Jesus, in the Greek Soter, but in our speech Saviour. And this word the Latin language had not previously, but could have seeing that it could have it when it wanted it. And this foregoing sentence of the apostle, where he says, “For when we were yet weak, in due time He died for the ungodly,” coheres with those two following sentences; in the one of which he spoke of sinners, in the other of enemies of God, as though he referred each severally to each, viz. sinners to the weak, the enemies of God to the ungodly.

## CHAPTER 11

### A DIFFICULTY, HOW WE ARE JUSTIFIED IN THE BLOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

15. But what is meant by “justified in His blood?” What power is there in this blood, I beseech you, that they who believe should be justified in it? And what is meant by “being reconciled by the death of His Son?” Was it indeed so, that when God the Father was wroth with us, He saw the death of His Son for us, and was appeased towards us? Was then His Son already so far appeased towards us, that He even deigned to die for us; while the Father was still so far wroth, that except His Son died for us, He would not be appeased? And what, then, is that which the same teacher of the Gentiles himself says in another place: “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how has He not with Him also freely given us all things?” Pray, unless the Father had been already appeased, would He have delivered up His own Son, not sparing Him for us? Does not this opinion seem to be as it were contrary to that? In the one, the Son dies for us, and the Father is reconciled to us by His death; in the other, as though the Father first loved us, He Himself on our account does not spare the Son, He Himself for us delivers Him up to death. But I see that the Father loved us also before, not only before the Son died for us, but before He created the world; the apostle himself being witness, who says, “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” Nor was the Son delivered up for us as it were unwillingly, the Father Himself not sparing Him; for it is said also concerning Him, “Who loved me, and delivered up Himself for me.” Therefore together both the Father and the Son, and the Spirit of both, work all things equally and harmoniously; yet we are justified in the blood of Christ, and we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. And I will explain, as I shall be able, here also, how this was done, as much as may seem sufficient.

## CHAPTER 12

ALL, ON ACCOUNT OF THE SIN OF ADAM, WERE DELIVERED INTO THE POWER OF THE DEVIL

16. By the justice of God in some sense, the human race was delivered into the power of the devil; the sin of the first man passing over originally into all of both sexes in their birth through conjugal union, and the debt of our first parents binding their whole posterity. This delivering up is first

signified in Genesis, where, when it had been said to the serpent, “Dust shalt thou eat,” it was said to the man, “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.” In the words, “Unto dust shalt thou return,” the death of the body is fore-announced, because he would not have experienced that either, if he had continued to the end upright as he was made; but in that it is said to him whilst still living, “Dust thou art,” it is shown that the whole man was changed for the worse. For “Dust thou art” is much the same as, “My spirit shall not always remain in these men, for that they also are flesh.” Therefore it was at that time shown, that he was delivered to him, in that it had been said to him, “Dust shalt thou eat.” But the apostle declares this more clearly, where he says: “And you who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of unfaithfulness; among whom we also had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” The “children of unfaithfulness” are the unbelievers; and who is not this before he becomes a believer? And therefore all men are originally under the prince of the power of the air, “who worketh in the children of unfaithfulness.” And that which I have expressed by “originally” is the same that the apostle expresses when he speaks of themselves who “by nature” were as others; viz. by nature as it has been depraved by sin, not as it was created upright from the beginning. But the way in which man was thus delivered into the power of the devil, ought not to be so understood as if God did this, or commanded it to be done; but that He only permitted it, yet that justly. For when He abandoned the sinner, the author of the sin immediately entered. Yet God did not certainly so abandon His own creature as not to show Himself to him as God creating and quickening, and among penal evils bestowing also many good things upon the evil. For He hath not in anger shut up His tender mercies. Nor did He dismiss man from the law of His own power, when He permitted him to be in the power of the devil; since even the devil himself is not separated from the power of the Omnipotent, as neither from His goodness. For whence do even the evil angels subsist in whatever manner of life they have, except through Him who quickens all things? If, therefore, the commission of sins through the

just anger of God subjected man to the devil, doubtless the remission of sins through the merciful reconciliation of God rescues man from the devil.

#### CHAPTER 13

##### MAN WAS TO BE RESCUED FROM THE POWER OF THE DEVIL, NOT BY POWER, BUT BY RIGHTEOUSNESS

17. But the devil was to be overcome, not by the power of God, but by His righteousness. For what is more powerful than the Omnipotent? Or what creature is there of which the power can be compared to the power of the Creator? But since the devil, by the fault of his own perversity, was made a lover of power, and a forsaker and assailant of righteousness,—for thus also men imitate him so much the more in proportion as they set their hearts on power, to the neglect or even hatred of righteousness, and as they either rejoice in the attainment of power, or are inflamed by the lust of it,—it pleased God, that in order to the rescuing of man from the grasp of the devil, the devil should be conquered, not by power, but by righteousness; and that so also men, imitating Christ, should seek to conquer the devil by righteousness, not by power. Not that power is to be shunned as though it were something evil; but the order must be preserved, whereby righteousness is before it. For how great can be the power of mortals? Therefore let mortals cleave to righteousness; power will be given to immortals. And compared to this, the power, how great soever, of those men who are called powerful on earth, is found to be ridiculous weakness, and a pitfall is dug there for the sinner, where the wicked seem to be most powerful. And the righteous man says in his song, “Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law: that Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. For the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance, until righteousness return unto judgment, and all who follow it are upright in heart.” At this present time, then, in which the might of the people of God is delayed, “the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance,” how bitter and unworthy things soever it may suffer in its humility and weakness; “until the righteousness,” which the weakness of the pious now possesses, “shall return to judgment,” that is, shall receive the power of judging; which is

preserved in the end for the righteous when power in its due order shall have followed after righteousness going before. For power joined to righteousness, or righteousness added to power, constitutes a judicial authority. But righteousness belongs to a good will; whence it was said by the angels when Christ was born: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." But power ought to follow righteousness, not to go before it; and accordingly it is placed in "second," that is, prosperous fortune; and this is called "second," from "following." For whereas two things make a man blessed, as we have argued above, to will well, and to be able to do what one wills, people ought not to be so perverse, as has been noted in the same discussion, as that a man should choose from the two things which make him blessed, the being able to do what he wills, and should neglect to will what he ought; whereas he ought first to have a good will, but great power afterwards. Further, a good will must be purged from vices, by which if a man is overcome, he is in such wise overcome as that he wills evil; and then how will his will be still good? It is to be wished, then, that power may now be given, but power against vices, to conquer which men do not wish to be powerful, while they wish to be so in order to conquer men; and why is this, unless that, being in truth conquered, they feignedly conquer, and are conquerors not in truth, but in opinion? Let a man will to be prudent, will to be strong, will to be temperate, will to be just; and that he may be able to have these things truly, let him certainly desire power, and seek to be powerful in himself, and (strange though it be) against himself for himself. But all the other things which he wills rightly, and yet is not able to have, as, for instance, immortality and true and full felicity, let him not cease to long for, and let him patiently expect.

#### CHAPTER 14

##### THE UNOBLIGATED DEATH OF CHRIST HAS FREED THOSE WHO WERE LIABLE TO DEATH

18. What, then, is the righteousness by which the devil was conquered? What, except the righteousness of Jesus Christ? And how was he conquered? Because, when he found in Him nothing worthy of death, yet he slew Him. And certainly it is just, that we whom he held as debtors, should be dismissed free by believing in Him whom he slew without any debt. In



this way it is that we are said to be justified in the blood of Christ. For so that innocent blood was shed for the remission of our sins. Whence He calls Himself in the Psalms, "Free among the dead." For he only that is dead is free from the debt of death. Hence also in another psalm He says, "Then I restored that which I seized not;" meaning sin by the thing seized, because sin is laid hold of against what is lawful. Whence also He says, by the mouth of His own Flesh, as is read in the Gospel: "For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me," that is, no sin; but "that the world may know," He says, "that I do the commandment of the Father; arise, let us go hence." And hence He proceeds to His passion, that He might pay for us debtors that which He Himself did not owe. Would then the devil be conquered by this most just right, if Christ had willed to deal with him by power, not by righteousness? But He held back what was possible to Him, in order that He might first do what was fitting. And hence it was necessary that He should be both man and God. For unless He had been man, He could not have been slain; unless He had been God, men would not have believed that He would not do what He could, but that He could not do what He would; nor should we have thought that righteousness was preferred by Him to power, but that He lacked power. But now He suffered for us things belonging to man, because He was man; but if He had been unwilling, it would have been in His power to not so to suffer, because He was also God. And righteousness was therefore made more acceptable in humility, because so great power as was in His Divinity, if He had been unwilling, would have been able not to suffer humility; and thus by Him who died, being thus powerful, both righteousness was commended, and power promised, to us, weak mortals. For He did one of these two things by dying, the other by rising again. For what is more righteous, than to come even to the death of the cross for righteousness? And what more powerful, than to rise from the dead, and to ascend into heaven with that very flesh in which He was slain? And therefore He conquered the devil first by righteousness, and afterwards by power: namely, by righteousness, because He had no sin, and was slain by him most unjustly; but by power, because having been dead He lived again, never afterwards to die. But He would have conquered the devil by power, even though He could not have been slain by him: although it belongs to a greater power to conquer death itself also by rising again, than to avoid it by living. But the reason is really a

different one, why we are justified in the blood of Christ, when we are rescued from the power of the devil through the remission of sins: it pertains to this, that the devil is conquered by Christ by righteousness, not by power. For Christ was crucified, not through immortal power, but through the weakness which He took upon Him in mortal flesh; of which weakness nevertheless the apostle says, “that the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

## CHAPTER 15

### OF THE SAME SUBJECT

19. It is not then difficult to see that the devil was conquered, when he who was slain by Him rose again. It is something more, and more profound of comprehension, to see that the devil was conquered when he thought himself to have conquered, that is, when Christ was slain. For then that blood, since it was His who had no sin at all, was poured out for the remission of our sins; that, because the devil deservedly held those whom, as guilty of sin, he bound by the condition of death, he might deservedly loose them through Him, whom, as guilty of no sin, the punishment of death undeservedly affected. The strong man was conquered by this righteousness, and bound with this chain, that his vessels might be spoiled, which with himself and his angels had been vessels of wrath while with him, and might be turned into vessels of mercy. For the Apostle Paul tells us, that these words of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself were spoken from heaven to him when he was first called. For among the other things which he heard, he speaks also of this as said to him thus: “For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen from me, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open the eyes of the blind, and to turn them from darkness [to light], and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified, and faith that is in me.” And hence the same apostle also, exhorting believers to the giving of thanks to God the Father, says: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption, even the

forgiveness of sins.” In this redemption, the blood of Christ was given, as it were, as a price for us, by accepting which the devil was not enriched, but bound: that we might be loosened from his bonds, and that he might not with himself involve in the meshes of sins, and so deliver to the destruction of the second and eternal death, any one of those whom Christ, free from all debt, had redeemed by pouring out His own blood unindebtedly; but that they who belong to the grace of Christ, foreknown, and predestinated, and elected before the foundation of the world should only so far die as Christ Himself died for them, i.e. only by the death of the flesh, not of the spirit.

## CHAPTER 16

THE REMAINS OF DEATH AND THE EVIL THINGS OF THE WORLD TURN TO GOOD FOR THE ELECT. HOW FITLY THE DEATH OF CHRIST WAS CHOSEN, THAT WE MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED IN HIS BLOOD. WHAT THE ANGER OF GOD IS

20. For although the death, too, of the flesh itself came originally from the sin of the first man, yet the good use of it has made most glorious martyrs. And so not only that death itself, but all the evils of this world, and the griefs and labors of men, although they come from the deserts of sins, and especially of original sin, whence life itself too became bound by the bond of death, yet have fitly remained, even when sin is forgiven; that man might have wherewith to contend for truth, and whereby the goodness of the faithful might be exercised; in order that the new man through the new covenant might be made ready among the evils of this world for a new world, by bearing wisely the misery which this condemned life deserved, and by rejoicing soberly because it will be finished, but expecting faithfully and patiently the blessedness which the future life, being set free, will have for ever. For the devil being cast forth from his dominion, and from the hearts of the faithful, in the condemnation and faithlessness of whom he, although himself also condemned, yet reigned, is only so far permitted to be an adversary according to the condition of this mortality, as God knows to be expedient for them: concerning which the sacred writings speak through the mouth of the apostle: “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” And those evils which the faithful endure piously, are of profit either for the correction of sins, or for

the exercising and proving of righteousness, or to manifest the misery of this life, that the life where will be that true and perpetual blessedness may be desired more ardently, and sought out more earnestly. But it is on their account that these evils are still kept in being, of whom the apostle says: “For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called to be holy according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” It is of these who are predestinated, that not one shall perish with the devil; not one shall remain even to death under the power of the devil. And then follows what I have already cited above: “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how has He not with Him also freely given us all things?”

21. Why then should the death of Christ not have come to pass? Nay, rather, why should not that death itself have been chosen above all else to be brought to pass, to the passing by of the other innumerable ways which He who is omnipotent could have employed to free us; that death, I say, wherein neither was anything diminished or changed from His divinity, and so great benefit was conferred upon men, from the humanity which He took upon Him, that a temporal death, which was not due, was rendered by the eternal Son of God, who was also the Son of man, whereby He might free them from an eternal death which was due? The devil was holding fast our sins, and through them was fixing us deservedly in death. He discharged them, who had none of His own, and who was led by him to death undeservedly. That blood was of such price, that he who even slew Christ for a time by a death which was not due, can as his due detain no one, who has put on Christ, in the eternal death which was due. Therefore “God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” Justified, he says, in His blood,—justified plainly, in that we are freed from all sin; and freed from all sin, because the Son of God, who knew no sin, was slain for us. Therefore “we shall be

saved from wrath through Him;" from the wrath certainly of God, which is nothing else but just retribution. For the wrath of God is not, as is that of man, a perturbation of the mind; but it is the wrath of Him to whom Holy Scripture says in another place, "But Thou, O Lord, mastering Thy power, judgest with calmness." If, therefore, the just retribution of God has received such a name, what can be the right understanding also of the reconciliation of God, unless that then such wrath comes to an end? Neither were we enemies to God, except as sins are enemies to righteousness; which being forgiven, such enmities come to an end, and they whom He Himself justifies are reconciled to the Just One. And yet certainly He loved them even while still enemies, since "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all," when we were still enemies. And therefore the apostle has rightly added: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son," by which that remission of sins was made, "much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved in His life." Saved in life, who were reconciled by death. For who can doubt that He will give His life for His friends, for whom, when enemies, He gave His death? "And not only so," he says, "but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." "Not only," he says, "shall we be saved," but "we also joy;" and not in ourselves, but "in God;" nor through ourselves, "but through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement," as we have argued above. Then the apostle adds, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned;" etc.: in which he disputes at some length concerning the two men; the one the first Adam, through whose sin and death we, his descendants, are bound by, as it were, hereditary evils; and the other the second Adam, who is not only man, but also God, by whose payment for us of what He owed not, we are freed from the debts both of our first father and of ourselves. Further, since on account of that one the devil held all who were begotten through his corrupted carnal concupiscence, it is just that on account of this one he should loose all who are regenerated through His immaculate spiritual grace.

OTHER ADVANTAGES OF THE INCARNATION

22. There are many other things also in the incarnation of Christ, displeasing as it is to the proud, that are to be observed and thought of advantageously. And one of them is, that it has been demonstrated to man what place he has in the things which God has created; since human nature could so be joined to God, that one person could be made of two substances, and thereby indeed of three—God, soul, and flesh: so that those proud malignant spirits, who interpose themselves as mediators to deceive, although as if to help, do not therefore dare to place themselves above man because they have not flesh; and chiefly because the Son of God deigned to die also in the same flesh, lest they, because they seem to be immortal, should therefore succeed in getting themselves worshipped as gods. Further, that the grace of God might be commended to us in the man Christ without any precedent merits; because not even He Himself obtained by any precedent merits that He should be joined in such great unity with the true God, and should become the Son of God, one Person with Him; but from the time when He began to be man, from that time He is also God; whence it is said, “The Word was made flesh.” Then, again, there is this, that the pride of man, which is the chief hindrance against his cleaving to God, can be confuted and healed through such great humility of God. Man learns also how far he has gone away from God; and what it is worth to him as a pain to cure him, when he returns through such a Mediator, who both as God assists men by His divinity, and as man agrees with men by His weakness. For what greater example of obedience could be given to us, who had perished through disobedience, than God the Son obedient to God the Father, even to the death of the cross? Nay, wherein could the reward of obedience itself be better shown, than in the flesh of so great a Mediator, which rose again to eternal life? It belonged also to the justice and goodness of the Creator, that the devil should be conquered by the same rational creature which he rejoiced to have conquered, and by one that came from that same race which, by the corruption of its origin through one, he held altogether.

## CHAPTER 18

### WHY THE SON OF GOD TOOK MAN UPON HIMSELF FROM THE RACE OF ADAM, AND FROM A VIRGIN

23. For assuredly God could have taken upon Himself to be man, that in that manhood He might be the Mediator between God and men, from some other source, and not from the race of that Adam who bound the human race by his sin; as He did not create him whom He first created, of the race of some one else. Therefore He was able, either so, or in any other mode that He would, to create yet one other, by whom the conqueror of the first might be conquered. But God judged it better both to take upon Him man through whom to conquer the enemy of the human race, from the race itself that had been conquered; and yet to do this of a virgin, whose conception, not flesh but spirit, not lust but faith, preceded. Nor did that concupiscence of the flesh intervene, by which the rest of men, who derive original sin, are propagated and conceived; but holy virginity became pregnant, not by conjugal intercourse, but by faith,—lust being utterly absent,—so that that which was born from the root of the first man might derive only the origin of race, not also of guilt. For there was born, not a nature corrupted by the contagion of transgression, but the one only remedy of all such corruptions. There was born, I say, a Man having nothing at all, and to have nothing at all, of sin; through whom they were to be born again so as to be freed from sin, who could not be born without sin. For although conjugal chastity makes a right use of the carnal concupiscence which is in our members; yet it is liable to motions not voluntary, by which it shows either that it could not have existed at all in paradise before sin, or if it did, that it was not then such as that sometimes it should resist the will. But now we feel it to be such, that in opposition to the law of the mind, and even if there is no question of begetting, it works in us the incitement of sexual intercourse; and if in this men yield to it, then it is satisfied by an act of sin; if they do not, then it is bridled by an act of refusal: which two things who could doubt to have been alien from paradise before sin? For neither did the chastity that then was do anything indecorous, nor did the pleasure that then was suffer anything unquiet. It was necessary, therefore, that this carnal concupiscence should be entirely absent, when the offspring of the Virgin was conceived; in whom the author of death was to find nothing worthy of

death, and yet was to slay Him in order that he might be conquered by the death of the Author of life: the conqueror of the first Adam, who held fast the human race, conquered by the second Adam, and losing the Christian race, freed out of the human race from human guilt, through Him who was not in the guilt, although He was of the race; that that deceiver might be conquered by that race which he had conquered by guilt. And this was so done, in order that man may not be lifted up, but “that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord.” For he who was conquered was only man; and he was therefore conquered, because he lusted proudly to be a god. But He who conquered was both man and God; and therefore He so conquered, being born of a virgin, because God in humility did not, as He governs other saints, so govern that Man, but bare Him [as a Son]. These so great gifts of God, and whatever else there are, which it is too long for us now upon this subject both to inquire and to discuss, could not exist unless the Word had been made flesh.

## CHAPTER 19

### WHAT IN THE INCARNATE WORD BELONGS TO KNOWLEDGE, WHAT TO WISDOM

24. And all these things which the Word made flesh did and bare for us in time and place, belong, according to the distinction which we have undertaken to demonstrate, to knowledge, not to wisdom. And as the Word is without time and without place, it is co-eternal with the Father, and in its wholeness everywhere; and if any one can, and as much as he can, speak truly concerning this Word, then his discourse will pertain to wisdom. And hence the Word made flesh, which is Christ Jesus, has the treasures both of wisdom and of knowledge. For the apostle, writing to the Colossians, says: “For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God which is Christ Jesus: in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” To what extent the apostle knew all those treasures, how much of them he had penetrated, and in them to how great things he had reached, who can know? Yet, for my part, according to that which is written, “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man



to profit withal; for to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;" if these two are in such way to be distinguished from each other, that wisdom is to be assigned to divine things, knowledge to human, I acknowledge both in Christ, and so with me do all His faithful ones. And when I read, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," I understand by the Word the true Son of God, I acknowledge in the flesh the true Son of man, and both together joined into one Person of God and man, by an ineffable copiousness of grace. And on account of this, the apostle goes on to say, "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." If we refer grace to knowledge, and truth to wisdom, I think we shall not swerve from that distinction between these two things which we have commended. For in those things that have their origin in time, this is the highest grace, that man is joined with God in unity of person; but in things eternal the highest truth is rightly attributed to the Word of God. But that the same is Himself the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,—this took place, in order that He Himself in things done for us in time should be the same for whom we are cleansed by the same faith, that we may contemplate Him steadfastly in things eternal. And those distinguished philosophers of the heathen who have been able to understand and discern the invisible things of God by those things which are made, have yet, as is said of them, "held down the truth in iniquity;" because they philosophized without a Mediator, that is, without the man Christ, whom they neither believed to be about to come at the word of the prophets, nor to have come at that of the apostles. For, placed as they were in these lowest things, they could not but seek some media through which they might attain to those lofty things which they had understood; and so they fell upon deceitful spirits, through whom it came to pass, that "they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." For in such forms also they set up or worshipped idols. Therefore Christ is our knowledge, and the same Christ is also our wisdom. He Himself implants in us faith concerning temporal things, He Himself shows forth the truth concerning eternal things. Through Him we reach on to Himself: we stretch through knowledge to wisdom; yet we do not withdraw from one and the same Christ, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge." But now we speak of

knowledge, and will hereafter speak of wisdom as much as He Himself shall grant. And let us not so take these two things, as if it were not allowable to speak either of the wisdom which is in human things, or of the knowledge which is in divine. For after a laxer custom of speech, both can be called wisdom, and both knowledge. Yet the apostle could not in any way have written, “To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge,” except also these several things had been properly called by the several names, of the distinction between which we are now treating.

## CHAPTER 20

WHAT HAS BEEN TREATED OF IN THIS BOOK. HOW WE HAVE REACHED BY STEPS TO A CERTAIN TRINITY, WHICH IS FOUND IN PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND TRUE FAITH

25. Now, therefore, let us see what this prolix discourse has effected, what it has gathered, whereto it has reached. It belongs to all men to will to be blessed; yet all men have not faith, whereby the heart is cleansed, and so blessedness is reached. And thus it comes to pass, that by means of the faith which not all men will, we have to reach on to the blessedness which every one wills. All see in their own heart that they will to be blessed; and so great is the agreement of human nature on this subject, that the man is not deceived who conjectures this concerning another's mind, out of his own: in short, we know ourselves that all will this. But many despair of being immortal, although no otherwise can any one be that which all will, that is, blessed. Yet they will also to be immortal if they could; but through not believing that they can, they do not so live that they can. Therefore faith is necessary, that we may attain blessedness in all the good things of human nature, that is, of both soul and body. But that same faith requires that this faith be limited in Christ, who rose in the flesh from the dead, not to die any more; and that no one is freed from the dominion of the devil, through the forgiveness of sins, save by Him; and that in the abiding place of the devil, life must needs be at once miserable and never-ending, which ought rather to be called death than life. All which I have also argued, so far as space permitted, in this book, while I have already said much on the subject in the fourth book of this work as well; but in that place for one purpose, here for another,—namely, there, that I might show why and how Christ was sent in the fullness of time by the Father, on account of those who say that He who

sent and He who was sent cannot be equal in nature; but here, in order to distinguish practical knowledge from contemplative wisdom.

26. For we wished to ascend, as it were, by steps, and to seek in the inner man, both in knowledge and in wisdom, a sort of trinity of its own special kind, such as we sought before in the outer man; in order that we may come, with a mind more practised in these lower things, to the contemplation of that Trinity which is God, according to our little measure, if indeed, we can even do this, at least in a riddle and as through a glass. If, then, any one have committed to memory the words of this faith in their sounds alone, not knowing what they mean, as they commonly who do not know Greek hold in memory Greek words, or similarly Latin ones, or those of any other language of which they are ignorant, has not he a sort of trinity in his mind? because, first, those sounds of words are in his memory, even when he does not think thereupon; and next, the mental vision (*acies*) of his act of recollection is formed thence when he conceives of them; and next, the will of him who remembers and thinks unites both. Yet we should by no means say that the man in so doing busies himself with a trinity of the interior man, but rather of the exterior; because he remembers, and when he wills, contemplates as much as he wills, that alone which belongs to the sense of the body, which is called hearing. Nor in such an act of thought does he do anything else than deal with images of corporeal things, that is, of sounds. But if he holds and recollects what those words signify, now indeed something of the inner man is brought into action; not yet, however, ought he to be said or thought to live according to a trinity of the inner man, if he does not love those things which are there declared, enjoined, promised. For it is possible for him also to hold and conceive these things, supposing them to be false, in order that he may endeavor to disprove them. Therefore that will, which in this case unites those things which are held in the memory with those things which are thence impressed on the mind's eye in conception, completes, indeed, some kind of trinity, since itself is a third added to two others; but the man does not live according to this, when those things which are conceived are taken to be false, and are not accepted. But when those things are believed to be true, and those things which therein ought to be loved, are loved, then at last the man does live according to a trinity of the inner man; for every one lives according to that which he

loves. But how can things be loved which are not known, but only believed? This question has been already treated of in former books; and we found, that no one loves what he is wholly ignorant of, but that when things not known are said to be loved, they are loved from those things which are known. And now we so conclude this book, that we admonish the just to live by faith, which faith worketh by love, so that the virtues also themselves, by which one lives prudently, boldly, temperately, and justly, be all referred to the same faith; for not otherwise can they be true virtues. And yet these in this life are not of so great worth, as that the remission of sins, of some kind or other, is not sometimes necessary here; and this remission comes not to pass, except through Him, who by His own blood conquered the prince of sinners. Whatsoever ideas are in the mind of the faithful man from this faith, and from such a life, when they are contained in the memory, and are looked at by recollection, and please the will, set forth a kind of trinity of its own sort. But the image of God, of which by His help we shall afterwards speak, is not yet in that trinity; a thing which will then be more apparent, when it shall have been shown where it is, which the reader may expect in a succeeding book.

# Book XIV

The true wisdom of man is treated of; and it is shown that the image of God, which man is in respect to his mind, is not placed properly in transitory things, as in memory, understanding, and love, whether of faith itself as existing in time, or even of the mind as busied with itself, but in things that are permanent; and that this wisdom is then perfected, when the mind is renewed in the knowledge of God, according to the image of Him who created man after His own Image, and thus attains to wisdom, wherein that which is contemplated is eternal.

## CHAPTER 1

WHAT THE WISDOM IS OF WHICH WE ARE HERE TO TREAT. WHENCE THE NAME OF PHILOSOPHER AROSE. WHAT HAS BEEN ALREADY SAID CONCERNING THE DISTINCTION OF KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM

1. We must now discourse concerning wisdom; not the wisdom of God, which without doubt is God, for His only-begotten Son is called the wisdom of God; but we will speak of the wisdom of man, yet of true wisdom, which is according to God, and is His true and chief worship, which is called in Greek by one term, *theosebeia*. And this term, as we have already observed, when our own countrymen themselves also wished to interpret it by a single term, was by them rendered piety, whereas piety means more commonly what the Greeks call *eusebeia*. But because *theosebeia* cannot be translated perfectly by any one word, it is better translated by two, so as to render it rather by “the worship of God.” That this is the wisdom of man, as we have already laid down in the twelfth book of this work, is shown by the authority of Holy Scripture, in the book of God’s servant Job, where we read that the Wisdom of God said to man, “Behold piety, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is knowledge;” or, as some have translated the Greek word *epistemen*, “learning,” which certainly takes its name from

learning, whence also it may be called knowledge. For everything is learned in order that it may be known. Although the same word, indeed, is employed in a different sense, where any one suffers evils for his sins, that he may be corrected. Whence is that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “For what son is he to whom the father giveth not discipline?” And this is still more apparent in the same epistle: “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” Therefore God Himself is the chiefest wisdom; but the worship of God is the wisdom of man, of which we now speak. For “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” It is in respect to this wisdom, therefore, which is the worship of God, that Holy Scripture says, “The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world.”

2. But if to dispute of wisdom belongs to wise men, what shall we do? Shall we dare indeed to profess wisdom, lest it should be mere impudence for ourselves to dispute about it? Shall we not be alarmed by the example of Pythagoras?—who dared not profess to be a wise man, but answered that he was a philosopher, i.e., a lover of wisdom; whence arose the name, that became thenceforth so much the popular name, that no matter how great the learning wherein any one excelled, either in his own opinion or that of others, in things pertaining to wisdom, he was still called nothing more than philosopher. Or was it for this reason that no one, even of such as these, dared to profess himself a wise man,—because they imagined that a wise man was one without sin? But our Scriptures do not say this, which say, “Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.” For doubtless he who thinks a man ought to be rebuked, judges him to have sin. However, for my part, I dare not profess myself a wise man even in this sense; it is enough for me to assume, what they themselves cannot deny, that to dispute of wisdom belongs also to the philosopher, i.e., the lover of wisdom. For they have not given over so disputing who have professed to be lovers of wisdom rather than wise men.

3. In disputing, then, about wisdom, they have defined it thus: Wisdom is the knowledge of things human and divine. And hence, in the last book, I have not withheld the admission, that the cognizance of both subjects,

whether divine or human, may be called both knowledge and wisdom. But according to the distinction made in the apostle's words, "To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge," this definition is to be divided, so that the knowledge of things divine shall be called wisdom, and that of things human appropriate to itself the name of knowledge; and of the latter I have treated in the thirteenth book, not indeed so as to attribute to this knowledge everything whatever that can be known by man about things human, wherein there is exceeding much of empty vanity and mischievous curiosity, but only those things by which that most wholesome faith, which leads to true blessedness, is begotten, nourished, defended, strengthened; and in this knowledge most of the faithful are not strong, however exceeding strong in the faith itself. For it is one thing to know only what man ought to believe in order to attain to a blessed life, which must needs be an eternal one; but another to know in what way this belief itself may both help the pious, and be defended against the impious, which last the apostle seems to call by the special name of knowledge. And when I was speaking of this knowledge before, my especial business was to commend faith, first briefly distinguishing things eternal from things temporal, and there discoursing of things temporal; but while deferring things eternal to the present book, I showed also that faith respecting things eternal is itself a thing temporal, and dwells in time in the hearts of believers, and yet is necessary in order to attain the things eternal themselves. I argued also, that faith respecting the things temporal which He that is eternal did and suffered for us as man, which manhood He bare in time and carried on to things eternal, is profitable also for the obtaining of things eternal; and that the virtues themselves, whereby in this temporal and mortal life men live prudently, bravely, temperately, and justly, are not true virtues, unless they are referred to that same faith, temporal though it is, which leads on nevertheless to things eternal.

## CHAPTER 2

THERE IS A KIND OF TRINITY IN THE HOLDING, CONTEMPLATING, AND LOVING OF FAITH TEMPORAL, BUT ONE THAT DOES NOT YET ATTAIN TO BEING PROPERLY AN IMAGE OF GOD

4. Wherefore since, as it is written, “While we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight;” undoubtedly, so long as the just man lives by faith, howsoever he lives according to the inner man, although he aims at truth and reaches on to things eternal by this same temporal faith, nevertheless in the holding, contemplating, and loving this temporal faith, we have not yet reached such a trinity as is to be called an image of God; lest that should seem to be constituted in things temporal which ought to be so in things eternal. For when the human mind sees its own faith, whereby it believes what it does not see, it does not see a thing eternal. For that will not always exist, which certainly will not then exist, when this pilgrimage, whereby we are absent from God, in such way that we must needs walk by faith, shall be ended, and that sight shall have succeeded it whereby we shall see face to face; just as now, because we believe although we do not see, we shall deserve to see, and shall rejoice at having been brought through faith to sight. For then it will be no longer faith, by which that is believed which is not seen; but sight, by which that is seen which is believed. And then, therefore, although we remember this past mortal life, and call to mind by recollection that we once believed what we did not see, yet that faith will be reckoned among things past and done with, not among things present and always continuing. And hence also that trinity which now consists in the remembering, contemplating, and loving this same faith while present and continuing, will then be found to be done with and past, and not still enduring. And hence it is to be gathered, that if that trinity is indeed an image of God, then this image itself would have to be reckoned, not among things that exist always, but among things transient.

### CHAPTER 3

#### A DIFFICULTY REMOVED, WHICH LIES IN THE WAY OF WHAT HAS JUST BEEN SAID

But far be it from us to think, that while the nature of the soul is immortal, and from the first beginning of its creation thenceforth never ceases to be, yet that that which is the best thing it has should not endure for ever with its own immortality. Yet what is there in its nature as created, better than that it is made after the image of its Creator? We must find then what may be fittingly called the image of God, not in the holding, contemplating, and



loving that faith which will not exist always, but in that which will exist always.

5. Shall we then scrutinize somewhat more carefully and deeply whether the case is really thus? For it may be said that this trinity does not perish even when faith itself shall have passed away; because, as now we both hold it by memory, and discern it by thought, and love it by will; so then also, when we shall both hold in memory, and shall recollect, that we once had it, and shall unite these two by the third, namely will, the same trinity will still continue. Since, if it have left in its passage as it were no trace in us, doubtless we shall not have ought of it even in our memory, whereto to recur when recollecting it as past, and by the third, viz. purpose, coupling both these, to wit, what was in our memory though we were not thinking about it, and what is formed thence by conception. But he who speaks thus, does not perceive, that when we hold, see, and love in ourselves our present faith, we are concerned with a different trinity as now existing, from that trinity which will exist, when we shall contemplate by recollection, not the faith itself, but as it were the imagined trace of it laid up in the memory, and shall unite by the will, as by a third, these two things, viz. that which was in the memory of him who retains, and that which is impressed thence upon the vision of the mind of him who recollects. And that we may understand this, let us take an example from things corporeal, of which we have sufficiently spoken in the eleventh book. For as we ascend from lower to higher things, or pass inward from outer to inner things, we first find a trinity in the bodily object which is seen, and in the vision of the seer, which, when he sees it, is informed thereby, and in the purpose of the will which combines both. Let us assume a trinity like this, when the faith which is now in ourselves is so established in our memory as the bodily object we spoke of was in place, from which faith is formed the conception in recollection, as from that bodily object was formed the vision of the beholder; and to these two, to complete the trinity, will is to be reckoned as a third, which connects and combines the faith established in the memory, and a sort of effigy of that faith impressed upon the vision of recollection; just as in that trinity of corporeal vision, the form of the bodily object that is seen, and the corresponding form wrought in the vision of the beholder, are combined by the purpose of the will. Suppose, then, that this bodily object

which was beheld was dissolved and had perished, and that nothing at all of it remained anywhere, to the vision of which the gaze might have recourse; are we then to say, that because the image of the bodily object thus now past and done with remains in the memory, whence to form the conception in recollecting, and to have the two united by will as a third, therefore it is the same trinity as that former one, when the appearance of the bodily object posited in place was seen? Certainly not, but altogether a different one: for, not to say that that was from without, while this is from within; the former certainly was produced by the appearance of a present bodily object, the latter by the image of that object now past. So, too, in the case of which we are now treating, to illustrate which we have thought good to adduce this example, the faith which is even now in our mind, as that bodily object was in place, while held, looked at, loved, produces a sort of trinity; but that trinity will exist no more, when this faith in the mind, like that bodily object in place, shall no longer exist. But that which will then exist, when we shall remember it to have been, but not now to be, in us, will doubtless be a different one. For that which now is, is wrought by the thing itself, actually present and attached to the mind of one who believes; but that which shall then be, will be wrought by the imagination of a past thing left in the memory of one who recollects.

#### CHAPTER 4

THE IMAGE OF GOD IS TO BE SOUGHT IN THE IMMORTALITY OF THE RATIONAL SOUL. HOW A TRINITY IS DEMONSTRATED IN THE MIND

6. Therefore neither is that trinity an image of God, which is not now, nor is that other an image of God, which then will not be; but we must find in the soul of man, i.e., the rational or intellectual soul, that image of the Creator which is immortally implanted in its immortality. For as the immortality itself of the soul is spoken with a qualification; since the soul too has its proper death, when it lacks a blessed life, which is to be called the true life of the soul; but it is therefore called immortal, because it never ceases to live with some life or other, even when it is most miserable;—so, although reason or intellect is at one time torpid in it, at another appears small, and at another great, yet the human soul is never anything save rational or intellectual; and hence, if it is made after the image of God in respect to

this, that it is able to use reason and intellect in order to understand and behold God, then from the moment when that nature so marvellous and so great began to be, whether this image be so worn out as to be almost none at all, or whether it be obscure and defaced, or bright and beautiful, certainly it always is. Further, too, pitying the defaced condition of its dignity, divine Scripture tells us, that “although man walks in an image, yet he disquieteth himself in vain; he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.” It would not therefore attribute vanity to the image of God, unless it perceived it to have been defaced. Yet it sufficiently shows that such defacing does not extend to the taking away its being an image, by saying, “Although man walks in an image.” Wherefore in both ways that sentence can be truly enunciated; in that, as it is said, “Although man walketh in an image, yet he disquieteth himself in vain,” so it may be said, “Although man disquieteth himself in vain, yet he walketh in an image.” For although the nature of the soul is great, yet it can be corrupted, because it is not the highest; and although it can be corrupted, because it is not the highest, yet because it is capable and can be partaker of the highest nature, it is a great nature. Let us seek, then, in this image of God a certain trinity of a special kind, with the aid of Him who Himself made us after His own image. For no otherwise can we healthfully investigate this subject, or arrive at any result according to the wisdom which is from Him. But if the reader will either hold in remembrance and recollect what we have said of the human soul or mind in former books, and especially in the tenth, or will carefully re-peruse it in the passages wherein it is contained, he will not require here any more lengthy discourse respecting the inquiry into so great a thing.

7. We said, then, among other things in the tenth book, that the mind of man knows itself. For the mind knows nothing so much as that which is close to itself; and nothing is more close to the mind than itself. We adduced also other evidences, as much as seemed sufficient, whereby this might be most certainly proved.

## CHAPTER 5

### WHETHER THE MIND OF INFANTS KNOWS ITSELF

What, then, is to be said of the mind of an infant, which is still so small, and buried in such profound ignorance of things, that the mind of a man which knows anything shrinks from the darkness of it? Is that too to be believed to know itself; but that, as being too intent upon those things which it has begun to perceive through the bodily senses, with the greater delight in proportion to their novelty, it is not able indeed to be ignorant of itself, but is also not able to think of itself? Moreover, how intently it is bent upon sensible things that are without it, may be conjectured from this one fact, that it is so greedy of sensible light, that if any one through carelessness, or ignorance of the possible consequences, place a light at nighttime where an infant is lying down, on that side to which the eyes of the child so lying down can be bent, but its neck cannot be turned, the gaze of that child will be so fixed in that direction, that we have known some to have come to squint by this means, in that the eyes retained that form which habit in some way impressed upon them while tender and soft. In the case, too, of the other bodily senses, the souls of infants, as far as their age permits, so narrow themselves as it were, and are bent upon them, that they either vehemently detest or vehemently desire that only which offends or allures through the flesh, but do not think of their own inward self, nor can be made to do so by admonition; because they do not yet know the signs that express admonition, whereof words are the chief, of which as of other things they are wholly ignorant. And that it is one thing not to know oneself, another not to think of oneself, we have shown already in the same book.

8. But let us pass by the infantine age, since we cannot question it as to what goes on within itself, while we have ourselves pretty well forgotten it. Let it suffice only for us hence to be certain, that when man has come to be able to think of the nature of his own mind, and to find out what is the truth, he will find it nowhere else but in himself. And he will find, not what he did not know, but that of which he did not think. For what do we know, if we do not know what is in our own mind; when we can know nothing at all of what we do know, unless by the mind?

## CHAPTER 6

### HOW A KIND OF TRINITY EXISTS IN THE MIND THINKING OF ITSELF. WHAT IS THE PART OF THOUGHT IN THIS TRINITY

The function of thought, however, is so great, that not even the mind itself can, so to say, place itself in its own sight, except when it thinks of itself; and hence it is so far the case, that nothing is in the sight of the mind, except that which is being thought of, that not even the mind itself, whereby we think whatever we do think, can be in its own sight otherwise than by thinking of itself. But in what way it is not in its own sight when it is not thinking of itself, while it can never be without itself, as though itself were one thing, and the sight of itself another, it is not in my power to discover. For this is not unreasonably said of the eye of the body; for the eye itself of the body is fixed in its own proper place in the body, but its sight extends to things external to itself, and reaches even to the stars. And the eye is not in its own sight, since it does not look at itself, unless by means of a mirror, as is said above; a thing that certainly does not happen when the mind places itself in its own sight by thinking of itself. Does it then see one part of itself by means of another part of itself, when it looks at itself in thought, as we look at some of our members, which can be in our sight, with other also of our members, viz. with our eyes? What can be said or thought more absurd? For by what is the mind removed, except by itself? or where is it placed so as to be in its own sight, except before itself? Therefore it will not be there, where it was, when it was not in its own sight; because it has been put down in one place, after being taken away from another. But if it migrated in order to be beheld, where will it remain in order to behold? Is it as it were doubled, so as to be in this and in that place at the same time, viz. both where it can behold, and where it can be beheld; that in itself it may be beholding, and before itself beheld? If we ask the truth, it will tell us nothing of the sort since it is but feigned images of bodily objects of which we conceive when we conceive thus; and that the mind is not such, is very certain to the few minds by which the truth on such a subject can be inquired. It appears, therefore, that the beholding of the mind is something pertaining to its nature, and is recalled to that nature when it conceives of itself, not as if by moving through space, but by an incorporeal conversion; but when it is not conceiving of itself, it appears that it is not indeed in its

own sight, nor is its own perception formed from it, but yet that it knows itself as though it were to itself a remembrance of itself. Like one who is skilled in many branches of learning: the things which he knows are contained in his memory, but nothing thereof is in the sight of his mind except that of which he is conceiving; while all the rest are stored up in a kind of secret knowledge, which is called memory. The trinity, then, which we were setting forth, was constituted in this way: first, we placed in the memory the object by which the perception of the percipient was formed; next, the conformation, or as it were the image which is impressed thereby; lastly, love or will as that which combines the two. When the mind, then, beholds itself in conception, it understands and cognizes itself; it begets, therefore, this its own understanding and cognition. For an incorporeal thing is understood when it is beheld, and is cognized when understood. Yet certainly the mind does not so beget this knowledge of itself, when it beholds itself as understood by conception, as though it had before been unknown to itself; but it was known to itself, in the way in which things are known which are contained in the memory, but of which one is not thinking; since we say that a man knows letters even when he is thinking of something else, and not of letters. And these two, the begetter and the begotten, are coupled together by love, as by a third, which is nothing else than will, seeking or holding fast the enjoyment of something. We held, therefore, that a trinity of the mind is to be intimated also by these three terms, memory, intelligence, will.

9. But since the mind, as we said near the end of the same tenth book, always remembers itself, and always understands and loves itself, although it does not always think of itself as distinguished from those things which are not itself; we must inquire in what way understanding (*intellectus*) belongs to conception, while the notion (*notitia*) of each thing that is in the mind, even when one is not thinking of it, is said to belong only to the memory. For if this is so, then the mind had not these three things: viz. the remembrance, the understanding, and the love of itself; but it only remembered itself, and afterwards, when it began to think of itself, then it understood and loved itself.

## CHAPTER 7

THE THING IS MADE PLAIN BY AN EXAMPLE. IN WHAT WAY THE MATTER IS  
HANDLED IN ORDER TO HELP THE READER

Wherefore let us consider more carefully that example which we have adduced, wherein it was shown that not knowing a thing is different from not thinking [conceiving] of it; and that it may so happen that a man knows something of which he is not thinking, when he is thinking of something else, not of that. When any one, then, who is skilled in two or more branches of knowledge is thinking of one of them, though he is not thinking of the other or others, yet he knows them. But can we rightly say, This musician certainly knows music, but he does not now understand it, because he is not thinking of it; but he does now understand geometry, for of that he is now thinking? Such an assertion, as far as appears, is absurd. What, again, if we were to say, This musician certainly knows music, but he does not now love it, while he is not now thinking of it; but he does now love geometry, because of that he is now thinking,—is not this similarly absurd? But we say quite correctly, This person whom you perceive disputing about geometry is also a perfect musician, for he both remembers music, and understands, and loves it; but although he both knows and loves it, he is not now thinking of it, since he is thinking of geometry, of which he is disputing. And hence we are warned that we have a kind of knowledge of certain things stored up in the recesses of the mind, and that this, when it is thought of, as it were, steps forth in public, and is placed as if openly in the sight of the mind; for then the mind itself finds that it both remembers, and understands, and loves itself, even although it was not thinking of itself, when it was thinking of something else. But in the case of that of which we have not thought for a long time, and cannot think of it unless reminded; that, if the phrase is allowable, in some wonderful way I know not how, we do not know that we know. In short, it is rightly said by him who reminds, to him whom he reminds, You know this, but you do not know that you know it; I will remind you, and you will find that you know what you had thought you did not know. Books, too, lead to the same results, viz. those that are written upon subjects which the reader under the guidance of reason finds to be true; not those subjects which he believes to be true on the faith of the narrator, as in the case of history; but those which he himself also

finds to be true, either of himself, or in that truth itself which is the light of the mind. But he who cannot contemplate these things, even when reminded, is too deeply buried in the darkness of ignorance, through great blindness of heart and too wonderfully needs divine help, to be able to attain to true wisdom.

10. For this reason I have wished to adduce some kind of proof, be it what it might, respecting the act of conceiving, such as might serve to show in what way, out of the things contained in the memory, the mind's eye is informed in recollecting, and some such thing is begotten, when a man conceives, as was already in him when, before he conceived, he remembered; because it is easier to distinguish things that take place at successive times, and where the parent precedes the offspring by an interval of time. For if we refer ourselves to the inner memory of the mind by which it remembers itself, and to the inner understanding by which it understands itself, and to the inner will by which it loves itself, where these three always are together, and always have been together since they began to be at all, whether they were being thought of or not; the image of this trinity will indeed appear to pertain even to the memory alone; but because in this case a word cannot be without a thought (for we think all that we say, even if it be said by that inner word which belongs to no separate language), this image is rather to be discerned in these three things, viz. memory, intelligence, will. And I mean now by intelligence that by which we understand in thought, that is, when our thought is formed by the finding of those things, which had been at hand to the memory but were not being thought of; and I mean that will, or love, or preference which combines this offspring and parent, and is in some way common to both. Hence it was that I tried also, viz. in the eleventh book, to lead on the slowness of readers by means of outward sensible things which are seen by the eyes of the flesh; and that I then proceeded to enter with them upon that power of the inner man whereby he reasons of things temporal, deferring the consideration of that which dominates as the higher power, by which he contemplates things eternal. And I discussed this in two books, distinguishing the two in the twelfth, the one of them being higher and the other lower, and that the lower ought to be subject to the higher; and in the thirteenth I discussed, with what truth and brevity I could, the office of the lower, in which the wholesome knowledge



of things human is contained, in order that we may so act in this temporal life as to attain that which is eternal; since, indeed, I have cursorily included in a single book a subject so manifold and copious, and one so well known by the many and great arguments of many and great men, while manifesting that a trinity exists also in it, but not yet one that can be called an image of God.

## CHAPTER 8

THE TRINITY WHICH IS THE IMAGE OF GOD IS NOW TO BE SOUGHT IN THE NOBLEST PART OF THE MIND

11. But we have come now to that argument in which we have undertaken to consider the noblest part of the human mind, by which it knows or can know God, in order that we may find in it the image of God. For although the human mind is not of the same nature with God, yet the image of that nature than which none is better, is to be sought and found in us, in that than which our nature also has nothing better. But the mind must first be considered as it is in itself, before it becomes partaker of God; and His image must be found in it. For, as we have said, although worn out and defaced by losing the participation of God, yet the image of God still remains. For it is His image in this very point, that it is capable of Him, and can be partaker of Him; which so great good is only made possible by its being His image. Well, then, the mind remembers, understands, loves itself; if we discern this, we discern a trinity, not yet indeed God, but now at last an image of God. The memory does not receive from without that which it is to hold; nor does the understanding find without that which it is to regard, as the eye of the body does; nor has will joined these two from without, as it joins the form of the bodily object and that which is thence wrought in the vision of the beholder; nor has conception, in being turned to it, found an image of a thing seen without, which has been somehow seized and laid up in the memory, whence the intuition of him that recollects has been formed, will as a third joining the two: as we showed to take place in those trinities which were discovered in things corporeal, or which were somehow drawn within from bodily objects by the bodily sense; of all which we have discoursed in the eleventh book. Nor, again, as it took place, or appeared to do so, when we went on further to discuss that knowledge, which had its

place now in the workings of the inner man, and which was to be distinguished from wisdom; of which knowledge the subject-matter was, as it were, adventitious to the mind, and either was brought thither by historical information,—as deeds and words, which are performed in time and pass away, or which again are established in the nature of things in their own times and places,—or arises in the man himself not being there before, whether on the information of others, or by his own thinking,—as faith, which we commended at length in the thirteenth book, or as the virtues, by which, if they are true, one so lives well in this mortality as to live blessedly in that immortality which God promises. These and other things of the kind have their proper order in time, and in that order we discerned more easily a trinity of memory, sight, and love. For some of such things anticipate the knowledge of learners. For they are knowable also before they are known, and beget in the learner a knowledge of themselves. And they either exist in their own proper places, or have happened in time past; although things that are past do not themselves exist, but only certain signs of them as past, the sight or hearing of which makes it known that they have been and have passed away. And these signs are either situate in the places themselves, as e.g. monuments of the dead or the like; or exist in written books worthy of credit, as is all history that is of weight and approved authority; or are in the minds of those who already know them; since what is already known to them is knowable certainly to others also, whose knowledge it has anticipated, and who are able to know it on the information of those who do know it. And all these things, when they are learned, produce a certain kind of trinity, viz. by their own proper species, which was knowable also before it was known, and by the application to this of the knowledge of the learner, which then begins to exist when he learns them, and by will as a third which combines both; and when they are known, yet another trinity is produced in the recollecting of them, and this now inwardly in the mind itself, from those images which, when they were learned, were impressed upon the memory, and from the informing of the thought when the look has been turned upon these by recollection, and from the will which as a third combines these two. But those things which arise in the mind, not having been there before, as faith and other things of that kind, although they appear to be adventitious, since they are implanted by teaching, yet are not situate without or transacted without, as are those things which are

believed; but began to be altogether within in the mind itself. For faith is not that which is believed, but that by which it is believed; and the former is believed, the latter seen. Nevertheless, because it began to be in the mind, which was a mind also before these things began to be in it, it seems to be somewhat adventitious, and will be reckoned among things past, when sight shall have succeeded, and itself shall have ceased to be. And it makes now by its presence, retained as it is, and beheld, and loved, a different trinity from that which it will then make by means of some trace of itself, which in passing it will have left in the memory: as has been already said above.

## CHAPTER 9

### WHETHER JUSTICE AND THE OTHER VIRTUES CEASE TO EXIST IN THE FUTURE LIFE

12. There is, however, some question raised, whether the virtues likewise by which one lives well in this present mortality, seeing that they themselves begin also to be in the mind, which was a mind none the less when it existed before without them, cease also to exist at that time when they have brought us to things eternal. For some have thought that they will cease, and in the case of three—prudence, fortitude, temperance—such an assertion seems to have something in it; but justice is immortal, and will rather then be made perfect in us than cease to be. Yet Tullius, the great author of eloquence, when arguing in the dialogue Hortensius, says of all four: “If we were allowed, when we migrated from this life, to live forever in the islands of the blessed, as fables tell, what need were there of eloquence when there would be no trials, or what need, indeed, of the very virtues themselves? For we should not need fortitude when nothing of either toil or danger was proposed to us; nor justice, when there was nothing of anybody else’s to be coveted; nor temperance, to govern lusts that would not exist; nor, indeed, should we need prudence, when there was no choice offered between good and evil. We should be blessed, therefore, solely by learning and knowing nature, by which alone also the life of the gods is praiseworthy. And hence we may perceive that everything else is a matter of necessity, but this is one of free choice.” This great orator, then, when proclaiming the excellence of philosophy, going over again all that he had learned from philosophers, and excellently and pleasantly explaining it, has affirmed all four virtues to be necessary in this life only, which we see to be

full of troubles and mistakes; but not one of them when we shall have migrated from this life, if we are permitted to live there where is a blessed life; but that blessed souls are blessed only in learning and knowing, i.e. in the contemplation of nature, than which nothing is better and more lovable. It is that nature which created and appointed all other natures. And if it belongs to justice to be subject to the government of this nature then justice is certainly immortal; nor will it cease to be in that blessedness, but will be such and so great that it cannot be more perfect or greater. Perhaps, too, the other three virtues—prudence although no longer with any risk of error, and fortitude without the vexation of bearing evils, and temperance without the thwarting of lust—will exist in that blessedness: so that it may be the part of prudence to prefer or equal no good thing to God; and of fortitude, to cleave to Him most steadfastly; and of temperance, to be pleased by no harmful defect. But that which justice is now concerned with in helping the wretched, and prudence in guarding against treachery, and fortitude in bearing troubles patiently, and temperance in controlling evil pleasures, will not exist there, where there will be no evil at all. And hence those acts of the virtues which are necessary to this mortal life, like the faith to which they are to be referred, will be reckoned among things past; and they make now a different trinity, whilst we hold, look at, and love them as present, from that which they will then make, when we shall discover them not to be, but to have been, by certain traces of them which they will have left in passing in the memory; since then, too, there will be a trinity, when that trace, be it of what sort it may, shall be retained in the memory, and truly recognized, and then these two be joined by will as a third.

## CHAPTER 10

### HOW A TRINITY IS PRODUCED BY THE MIND REMEMBERING, UNDERSTANDING, AND LOVING ITSELF

13. In the knowledge of all these temporal things which we have mentioned, there are some knowable things which precede the acquisition of the knowledge of them by an interval of time, as in the case of those sensible objects which were already real before they were known, or of all those things that are learned through history; but some things begin to be at the same time with the knowing of them,—just as, if any visible object,

which did not exist before at all, were to rise up before our eyes, certainly it does not precede our knowing it; or if there be any sound made where there is some one to hear, no doubt the sound and the hearing that sound begin and end simultaneously. Yet none the less, whether preceding in time or beginning to exist simultaneously, knowable things generate knowledge, and are not generated by knowledge. But when knowledge has come to pass, whenever the things known and laid up in memory are reviewed by recollection, who does not see that the retaining them in the memory is prior in time to the sight of them in recollection, and to the uniting of the two things by will as a third? In the mind, however, it is not so. For the mind is not adventitious to itself, as though there came to itself already existing, that same self not already existing, from somewhere else, or did not indeed come from somewhere else, but that in the mind itself already existing, there was born that same mind not already existing; just as faith, which before was not, arises in the mind which already was. Nor does the mind see itself, as it were, set up in its own memory by recollection subsequently to the knowing of itself, as though it was not there before it knew itself; whereas, doubtless, from the time when it began to be, it has never ceased to remember, to understand, and to love itself, as we have already shown. And hence, when it is turned to itself by thought, there arises a trinity, in which now at length we can discern also a word; since it is formed from thought itself, will uniting both. Here, then, we may recognize, more than we have hitherto done, the image of which we are in search.

## CHAPTER 11

### WHETHER MEMORY IS ALSO OF THINGS PRESENT

14. But some one will say, That is not memory by which the mind, which is ever present to itself, is affirmed to remember itself; for memory is of things past, not of things present. For there are some, and among them Cicero, who, in treating of the virtues, have divided prudence into these three—memory, understanding, forethought: to wit, assigning memory to things past, understanding to things present, forethought to things future; which last is certain only in the case of those who are prescient of the future; and this is no gift of men, unless it be granted from above, as to the prophets. And hence the book of Wisdom, speaking of men, “The thoughts of

mortals,” it says, “are fearful, and our forethought uncertain.” But memory of things past, and understanding of things present, are certain: certain, I mean, respecting things incorporeal, which are present; for things corporeal are present to the sight of the corporeal eyes. But let any one who denies that there is any memory of things present, attend to the language used even in profane literature, where exactness of words was more looked for than truth of things. “Nor did Ulysses suffer such things, nor did the Ithacan forget himself in so great a peril.” For when Virgil said that Ulysses did not forget himself, what else did he mean, except that he remembered himself? And since he was present to himself, he could not possibly remember himself, unless memory pertained to things present. And, therefore, as that is called memory in things past which makes it possible to recall and remember them; so in a thing present, as the mind is to itself, that is not unreasonably to be called memory, which makes the mind at hand to itself, so that it can be understood by its own thought, and then both be joined together by love of itself.

## CHAPTER 12

THE TRINITY IN THE MIND IS THE IMAGE OF GOD, IN THAT IT REMEMBERS,  
UNDERSTANDS, AND LOVES GOD, WHICH TO DO IS WISDOM

15. This trinity, then, of the mind is not therefore the image of God, because the mind remembers itself, and understands and loves itself; but because it can also remember, understand, and love Him by whom it was made. And in so doing it is made wise itself. But if it does not do so, even when it remembers, understands, and loves itself, then it is foolish. Let it then remember its God, after whose image it is made, and let it understand and love Him. Or to say the same thing more briefly, let it worship God, who is not made, by whom because itself was made, it is capable and can be partaker of Him; wherefore it is written, “Behold, the worship of God, that is wisdom.” And then it will be wise, not by its own light, but by participation of that supreme Light; and wherein it is eternal, therein shall reign in blessedness. For this wisdom of man is so called, in that it is also of God. For then it is true wisdom; for if it is human, it is vain. Yet not so of God, as is that wherewith God is wise. For He is not wise by partaking of Himself, as the mind is by partaking of God. But as we call it the

righteousness of God, not only when we speak of that by which He Himself is righteous, but also of that which He gives to man when He justifies the ungodly, which latter righteousness the apostle commending, says of some, that “not knowing the righteousness of God and going about to establish their own righteousness, they are not subject to the righteousness of God;” so also it may be said of some, that not knowing the wisdom of God and going about to establish their own wisdom, they are not subject to the wisdom of God.

16. There is, then, a nature not made, which made all other natures, great and small, and is without doubt more excellent than those which it has made, and therefore also than that of which we are speaking; viz. than the rational and intellectual nature, which is the mind of man, made after the image of Him who made it. And that nature, more excellent than the rest, is God. And indeed “He is not far from every one of us,” as the apostle says, who adds, “For in Him we live, and are moved, and have our being.” And if this were said in respect to the body, it might be understood even of this corporeal world; for in it too in respect to the body, we live, and are moved, and have our being. And therefore it ought to be taken in a more excellent way, and one that is spiritual, not visible, in respect to the mind, which is made after His image. For what is there that is not in Him, of whom it is divinely written, “For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things”? If, then, all things are in Him, in whom can any possibly live that do live, or be moved that are moved, except in Him in whom they are? Yet all are not with Him in that way in which it is said to Him, “I am continually with Thee.” Nor is He with all in that way in which we say, The Lord be with you. And so it is the especial wretchedness of man not to be with Him, without whom he cannot be. For, beyond a doubt, he is not without Him in whom he is; and yet if he does not remember, and understand, and love Him, he is not with Him. And when any one absolutely forgets a thing, certainly it is impossible even to remind him of it.

## CHAPTER 13

### HOW ANY ONE CAN FORGET AND REMEMBER GOD

17. Let us take an instance for the purpose from visible things. Somebody whom you do not recognize, says to you, You know me; and in order to remind you, tells you where, when, and how he became known to you; and if, after the mention of every sign by which you might be recalled to remembrance, you still do not recognize him, then you have so come to forget, as that the whole of that knowledge is altogether blotted out of your mind; and nothing else remains, but that you take his word for it who tells you that you once knew him; or do not even do that, if you do not think the person who speaks to you to be worthy of credit. But if you do remember him, then no doubt you return to your own memory, and find in it that which had not been altogether blotted out by forgetfulness. Let us return to that which led us to adduce this instance from the intercourse of men. Among other things, the 9th Psalm says, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations. that forget God;” and again the 22d Psalm, “All the ends of the world shall be reminded, and turned unto the Lord.” These nations, then, will not so have forgotten God as to be unable to remember Him when reminded of Him; yet, by forgetting God, as though forgetting their own life, they had been turned into death, i.e. into hell. But when reminded they are turned to the Lord, as though coming to life again by remembering their proper life which they had forgotten. It is read also in the 94th Psalm, “Perceive now, ye who are unwise among the people; and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?” etc. For this is spoken to those, who said vain things concerning God through not understanding Him.

#### CHAPTER 14

THE MIND LOVES GOD IN RIGHTLY LOVING ITSELF; AND IF IT LOVE NOT GOD, IT MUST BE SAID TO HATE ITSELF. EVEN A WEAK AND ERRING MIND IS ALWAYS STRONG IN REMEMBERING, UNDERSTANDING, AND LOVING ITSELF. LET IT BE TURNED TO GOD, THAT IT MAY BE BLESSED BY REMEMBERING, UNDERSTANDING, AND LOVING HIM

18. But there are yet more testimonies in the divine Scriptures concerning the love of God. For in it, those other two [namely, memory and understanding] are understood by consequence, inasmuch as no one loves that which he does not remember, or of which he is wholly ignorant. And hence is that well known and primary commandment, “Thou shalt love the



Lord thy God.” The human mind, then, is so constituted, that at no time does it not remember, and understand, and love itself. But since he who hates any one is anxious to injure him, not undeservedly is the mind of man also said to hate itself when it injures itself. For it wills ill to itself through ignorance, in that it does not think that what it wills is prejudicial to it; but it none the less does will ill to itself, when it wills what would be prejudicial to it. And hence it is written, “He that loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul.” He, therefore, who knows how to love himself, loves God; but he who does not love God, even if he does love himself,—a thing implanted in him by nature,—yet is not unsuitably said to hate himself, inasmuch as he does that which is adverse to himself, and assails himself as though he were his own enemy. And this is no doubt a terrible delusion, that whereas all will to profit themselves, many do nothing but that which is most pernicious to themselves. When the poet was describing a like disease of dumb animals, “May the gods,” says he, “grant better things to the pious, and assign that delusion to enemies. They were rending with bare teeth their own torn limbs.” Since it was a disease of the body he was speaking of, why has he called it a delusion, unless because, while nature inclines every animal to take all the care it can of itself, that disease was such that those animals rent those very limbs of theirs which they desired should be safe and sound? But when the mind loves God, and by consequence, as has been said remembers and understands Him, then it is rightly enjoined also to love its neighbor as itself; for it has now come to love itself rightly and not perversely when it loves God, by partaking of whom that image not only exists, but is also renewed so as to be no longer old, and restored so as to be no longer defaced, and beatified so as to be no longer unhappy. For although it so love itself, that, supposing the alternative to be proposed to it, it would lose all things which it loves less than itself rather than perish; still, by abandoning Him who is above it, in dependence upon whom alone it could guard its own strength, and enjoy Him as its light, to whom it is sung in the Psalm, “I will guard my strength in dependence upon Thee,” and again, “Draw near to Him, and be enlightened,”—it has been made so weak and so dark, that it has fallen away unhappily from itself too, to those things that are not what itself is, and which are beneath itself, by affections that it cannot conquer, and delusions from which it sees no way to return. And hence, when by

God's mercy now penitent, it cries out in the Psalms, "My strength faileth me; as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me."

19. Yet, in the midst of these evils of weakness and delusion, great as they are, it could not lose its natural memory, understanding and love of itself. And therefore what I quoted above can be rightly said, "Although man walketh in an image, surely he is disquieted in vain: he heapeth up treasures, and knoweth not who shall gather them." For why does he heap up treasures, unless because his strength has deserted him, through which he would have God, and so lack nothing? And why cannot he tell for whom he shall gather them, unless because the light of his eyes is taken from him? And so he does not see what the Truth saith, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" Yet because even such a man walketh in an image, and the man's mind has remembrance, understanding, and love of itself; if it were made plain to it that it could not have both, while it was permitted to choose one and lose the other, viz. either the treasures it has heaped up, or the mind; who is so utterly without mind, as to prefer to have the treasures rather than the mind? For treasures commonly are able to subvert the mind, but the mind that is not subverted by treasures can live more easily and unencumberedly without any treasures. But who will be able to possess treasures unless it be by means of the mind? For if an infant, born as rich as you please, although lord of everything that is rightfully his, yet possesses nothing if his mind be unconscious, how can any one possibly possess anything whose mind is wholly lost? But why say of treasures, that anybody, if the choice be given him, prefers going without them to going without a mind; when there is no one that prefers, nay, no one that compares them, to those lights of the body, by which not one man only here and there, as in the case of gold, but every man, possesses the very heaven? For every one possesses by the eyes of the body whatever he gladly sees. Who then is there, who, if he could not keep both, but must lose one, would not rather lose his treasures than his eyes? And yet if it were put to him on the same condition, whether he would rather lose eyes than mind, who is there with a mind that does not see that he would rather lose the former than the latter? For a mind without the eyes of the flesh is still human, but the

eyes of the flesh without a mind are bestial. And who would not rather be a man, even though blind in fleshly sight, than a beast that can see?

20. I have said thus much, that even those who are slower of understanding, to whose eyes or ears this book may come, might be admonished, however briefly, how greatly even a weak and erring mind loves itself, in wrongly loving and pursuing things beneath itself. Now it could not love itself if it were altogether ignorant of itself, i.e. if it did not remember itself, nor understand itself by which image of God within itself it has such power as to be able to cleave to Him whose image it is. For it is so reckoned in the order, not of place, but of natures, as that there is none above it save Him. When, finally, it shall altogether cleave to Him, then it will be one spirit, as the apostle testifies, saying, “But he who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit.” And this by its drawing near to partake of His nature, truth, and blessedness, yet not by His increasing in His own nature, truth and blessedness. In that nature, then, when it happily has cleaved to it, it will live unchangeably, and will see as unchangeable all that it does see. Then, as divine Scripture promises, “His desire will be satisfied with good things,” good things unchangeable,—the very Trinity itself, its own God, whose image it is. And that it may not ever thenceforward suffer wrong, it will be in the hidden place of His presence, filled with so great fullness of Him, that sin thenceforth will never delight it. But now, when it sees itself, it sees something not unchangeable.

## CHAPTER 15

ALTHOUGH THE SOUL HOPES FOR BLESSEDNESS, YET IT DOES NOT REMEMBER LOST BLESSEDNESS, BUT REMEMBERS GOD AND THE RULES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. THE UNCHANGEABLE RULES OF RIGHT LIVING ARE KNOWN EVEN TO THE UNGODLY

21. And of this certainly it feels no doubt, that it is wretched, and longs to be blessed nor can it hope for the possibility of this on any other ground than its own changeableness for if it were not changeable, then, as it could not become wretched after being blessed, so neither could it become blessed after being wretched. And what could have made it wretched under an omnipotent and good God, except its own sin and the righteousness of its Lord? And what will make it blessed, unless its own merit, and its Lord's reward? But its merit, too, is His grace, whose reward will be its

blessedness; for it cannot give itself the righteousness it has lost, and so has not. For this it received when man was created, and assuredly lost it by sinning. Therefore it receives righteousness, that on account of this it may deserve to receive blessedness; and hence the apostle truly says to it, when beginning to be proud as it were of its own good, “For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” But when it rightly remembers its own Lord, having received His Spirit, then, because it is so taught by an inward teaching, it feels wholly that it cannot rise save by His affection freely given, nor has been able to fall save by its own defection freely chosen. Certainly it does not remember its own blessedness; since that has been, but is not, and it has utterly forgotten it, and therefore cannot even be reminded of it. But it believes what the trustworthy Scriptures of its God tell of that blessedness, which were written by His prophet, and tell of the blessedness of Paradise, and hand down to us historical information of that first both good and ill of man. And it remembers the Lord its God; for He always is, nor has been and is not, nor is but has not been; but as He never will not be, so He never was not. And He is whole everywhere. And hence it both lives, and is moved, and is in Him; and so it can remember Him. Not because it recollects the having known Him in Adam or anywhere else before the life of this present body, or when it was first made in order to be implanted in this body; for it remembers nothing at all of all this. Whatever there is of this, it has been blotted out by forgetfulness. But it is reminded, that it may be turned to God, as though to that light by which it was in some way touched, even when turned away from Him. For hence it is that even the ungodly think of eternity, and rightly blame and rightly praise many things in the morals of men. And by what rules do they thus judge, except by those wherein they see how men ought to live, even though they themselves do not so live? And where do they see these rules? For they do not see them in their own [moral] nature; since no doubt these things are to be seen by the mind, and their minds are confessedly changeable, but these rules are seen as unchangeable by him who can see them at all; nor yet in the character of their own mind, since these rules are rules of righteousness, and their minds are confessedly unrighteous. Where indeed are these rules written, wherein even the unrighteous recognizes what is righteous, wherein he discerns that he ought to have what he himself has not? Where, then, are they written,

unless in the book of that Light which is called Truth? whence every righteous law is copied and transferred (not by migrating to it, but by being as it were impressed upon it) to the heart of the man that worketh righteousness; as the impression from a ring passes into the wax, yet does not leave the ring. But he who worketh not, and yet sees how he ought to work, he is the man that is turned away from that light, which yet touches him. But he who does not even see how he ought to live, sins indeed with more excuse, because he is not a transgressor of a law that he knows; but even he too is just touched sometimes by the splendor of the everywhere present truth, when upon admonition he confesses.

## CHAPTER 16

### HOW THE IMAGE OF GOD IS FORMED ANEW IN MAN

22. But those who, by being reminded, are turned to the Lord from that deformity whereby they were through worldly lusts conformed to this world, are formed anew from the world, when they hearken to the apostle, saying, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye formed again in the renewing of your mind;" that that image may begin to be formed again by Him by whom it had been formed at first. For that image cannot form itself again, as it could deform itself. He says again elsewhere: "Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put ye on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." That which is meant by "created after God," is expressed in another place by "after the image of God." But it lost righteousness and true holiness by sinning, through which that image became defaced and tarnished; and this it recovers when it is formed again and renewed. But when he says, "In the spirit of your mind," he does not intend to be understood of two things, as though mind were one, and the spirit of the mind another; but he speaks thus, because all mind is spirit, but all spirit is not mind. For there is a Spirit also that is God, which cannot be renewed, because it cannot grow old. And we speak also of a spirit in man distinct from the mind, to which spirit belong the images that are formed after the likeness of bodies; and of this the apostle speaks to the Corinthians, where he says, "But if I shall have prayed with a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." For he speaks thus, when that which is said is not understood; since it cannot even be said,

unless the images of the corporeal articulate sounds anticipate the oral sound by the thought of the spirit. The soul of man is also called spirit, whence are the words in the Gospel, “And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit;” by which the death of the body, through the spirit’s leaving it, is signified. We speak also of the spirit of a beast, as it is expressly written in the book of Solomon called Ecclesiastes; “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” It is written too in Genesis, where it is said that by the deluge all flesh died which “had in it the spirit of life.” We speak also of the spirit, meaning the wind, a thing most manifestly corporeal; whence is that in the Psalms, “Fire and hail, snow and ice, the spirit of the storm.” Since spirit, then, is a word of so many meanings, the apostle intended to express by “the spirit of the mind” that spirit which is called the mind. As the same apostle also, when he says, “In putting off the body of the flesh,” certainly did not intend two things, as though flesh were one, and the body of the flesh another; but because body is the name of many things that have no flesh (for besides the flesh, there are many bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial), he expressed by the body of the flesh that body which is flesh. In like manner, therefore, by the spirit of the mind, that spirit which is mind. Elsewhere, too, he has even more plainly called it an image, while enforcing the same thing in other words. “Do you,” he says, “putting off the old man with his deeds, put on the new man, which is renewed in the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him.” Where the one passage reads, “Put ye on the new man, which is created after God,” the other has, “Put ye on the new man, which is renewed after the image of Him that created him.”

In the one place he says, “After God;” in the other, “After the image of Him that created him.” But instead of saying, as in the former passages “In righteousness and true holiness,” he has put in the latter, “In the knowledge of God.” This renewal, then, and forming again of the mind, is wrought either after God, or after the image of God. But it is said to be after God, in order that it may not be supposed to be after another creature; and to be after the image of God, in order that this renewing may be understood to take place in that wherein is the image of God, i.e. in the mind. Just as we say, that he who has departed from the body a faithful and righteous man, is

dead after the body, not after the spirit. For what do we mean by dead after the body, unless as to the body or in the body, and not dead as to the soul or in the soul? Or if we want to say he is handsome after the body, or strong after the body, not after the mind; what else is this, than that he is handsome or strong in body, not in mind? And the same is the case with numberless other instances. Let us not therefore so understand the words, "After the image of Him that created him," as though it were a different image after which he is renewed, and not the very same which is itself renewed.

## CHAPTER 17

HOW THE IMAGE OF GOD IN THE MIND IS RENEWED UNTIL THE LIKENESS OF GOD IS PERFECTED IN IT IN BLESSEDNESS

23. Certainly this renewal does not take place in the single moment of conversion itself, as that renewal in baptism takes place in a single moment by the remission of all sins; for not one, be it ever so small, remains unremitted. But as it is one thing to be free from fever, and another to grow strong again from the infirmity which the fever produced; and one thing again to pluck out of the body a weapon thrust into it, and another to heal the wound thereby made by a prosperous cure; so the first cure is to remove the cause of infirmity, and this is wrought by the forgiving of all sins; but the second cure is to heal the infirmity itself, and this takes place gradually by making progress in the renewal of that image: which two things are plainly shown in the Psalm, where we read, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities," which takes place in baptism; and then follows, "and healeth all thine infirmities;" and this takes place by daily additions, while this image is being renewed. And the apostle has spoken of this most expressly, saying, "And though our outward man perish, yet the inner man is renewed day by day." And "it is renewed in the knowledge of God, i.e. in righteousness and true holiness," according to the testimonies of the apostle cited a little before. He, then, who is day by day renewed by making progress in the knowledge of God, and in righteousness and true holiness, transfers his love from things temporal to things eternal, from things visible to things intelligible, from things carnal to things spiritual; and diligently perseveres in bridling and lessening his desire for the former, and in binding himself by love to the latter. And he does this in proportion as he is helped by God. For

it is the sentence of God Himself, "Without me ye can do nothing." And when the last day of life shall have found any one holding fast faith in the Mediator in such progress and growth as this, he will be welcomed by the holy angels, to be led to God, whom he has worshipped, and to be made perfect by Him; and so will receive in the end of the world an incorruptible body, in order not to punishment, but to glory. For the likeness of God will then be perfected in this image, when the sight of God shall be perfected. And of this the Apostle Paul speaks: "Now we see through a glass, in an enigma, but then face to face." And again: "But we with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." And this is what happens from day to day in those that make good progress.

## CHAPTER 18

WHETHER THE SENTENCE OF JOHN IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD OF OUR FUTURE LIKENESS WITH THE SON OF GOD IN THE IMMORTALITY ITSELF ALSO OF THE BODY

24. But the Apostle John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Hence it appears, that the full likeness of God is to take place in that image of God at that time when it shall receive the full sight of God. And yet this may also possibly seem to be said by the Apostle John of the immortality of the body. For we shall be like to God in this too, but only to the Son, because He only in the Trinity took a body, in which He died and rose again, and which He carried with Him to heaven above. For this, too, is called an image of the Son of God, in which we shall have, as He has, an immortal body, being conformed in this respect not to the image of the Father or of the Holy Spirit, but only of the Son, because of Him alone is it read and received by a sound faith, that "the Word was made flesh." And for this reason the apostle says, "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren." "The first-born" certainly "from the dead," according to the same apostle; by which death His flesh was sown in dishonor, and rose again in glory. According to this image of the Son, to which we are conformed in the body by immortality, we also do that of which the same



apostle speaks, “As we have borne the image of the earthy, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly;” to wit, that we who are mortal after Adam, may hold by a true faith, and a sure and certain hope, that we shall be immortal after Christ. For so can we now bear the same image, not yet in sight, but in faith; not yet in fact, but in hope. For the apostle, when he said this, was speaking of the resurrection of the body.

## CHAPTER 19

JOHN IS RATHER TO BE UNDERSTOOD OF OUR PERFECT LIKENESS WITH THE TRINITY  
IN LIFE ETERNAL. WISDOM IS PERFECTED IN HAPPINESS

25. But in respect to that image indeed, of which it is said, “Let us make man after our image and likeness,” we believe,—and, after the utmost search we have been able to make, understand,—that man was made after the image of the Trinity, because it is not said, After my, or After thy image. And therefore that place too of the Apostle John must be understood rather according to this image, when he says, “We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is,” because he spoke too of Him of whom he had said, “We are the sons of God.” And the immortality of the flesh will be perfected in that moment of the resurrection, of which the Apostle Paul says, “In the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” For in that very twinkling of an eye, before the judgment, the spiritual body shall rise again in power, in incorruption, in glory, which is now sown a natural body in weakness, in corruption, in dishonor. But the image which is renewed in the spirit of the mind in the knowledge of God, not outwardly, but inwardly, from day to day, shall be perfected by that sight itself; which then after the judgment shall be face to face, but now makes progress as through a glass in an enigma. And we must understand it to be said on account of this perfection, that “we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” For this gift will be given to us at that time, when it shall have been said, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” For then will the ungodly be taken away, so that he shall not see the glory of the Lord, when those on the left hand shall go into eternal punishment, while those on the right go into life eternal. But “this is eternal life,” as the Truth tells us; “to

know Thee,” He says, “the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

26. This contemplative wisdom, which I believe is properly called wisdom as distinct from knowledge in the sacred writings; but wisdom only of man, which yet man has not except from Him, by partaking of whom a rational and intellectual mind can be made truly wise;—this contemplative wisdom, I say, it is that Cicero commends, in the end of the dialogue Hortensius, when he says: “While, then, we consider these things night and day, and sharpen our understanding, which is the eye of the mind, taking care that it be not ever dulled, that is, while we live in philosophy; we, I say, in so doing, have great hope that, if, on the one hand, this sentiment and wisdom of ours is mortal and perishable, we shall still, when we have discharged our human offices, have a pleasant setting, and a not painful extinction, and as it were a rest from life: or if, on the other, as ancient philosophers thought,—and those, too, the greatest and far the most celebrated,—we have souls eternal and divine, then must we needs think, that the more these shall have always kept in their own proper course, i.e. in reason and in the desire of inquiry, and the less they shall have mixed and entangled themselves in the vices and errors of men, the more easy ascent and return they will have to heaven.” And then he says, adding this short sentence, and finishing his discourse by repeating it: “Wherefore, to end my discourse at last, if we wish either for a tranquil extinction, after living in the pursuit of these subjects, or if to migrate without delay from this present home to another in no little measure better, we must bestow all our labor and care upon these pursuits.” And here I marvel, that a man of such great ability should promise to men living in philosophy, which makes man blessed by contemplation of truth, “a pleasant setting after the discharge of human offices, if this our sentiment and wisdom is mortal and perishable;” as if that which we did not love, or rather which we fiercely hated, were then to die and come to nothing, so that its setting would be pleasant to us! But indeed he had not learned this from the philosophers, whom he extols with great praise; but this sentiment is redolent of that New Academy, wherein it pleased him to doubt of even the plainest things. But from the philosophers that were greatest and far most celebrated, as he himself confesses, he had learned that souls are eternal. For souls that are eternal are not unsuitably

stirred up by the exhortation to be found in “their own proper course,” when the end of this life shall have come, i.e. “in reason and in the desire of inquiry,” and to mix and entangle themselves the less in the vices and errors of men, in order that they may have an easier return to God. But that course which consists in the love and investigation of truth does not suffice for the wretched, i.e. for all mortals who have only this kind of reason, and are without faith in the Mediator; as I have taken pains to prove, as much as I could, in former books of this work, especially in the fourth and thirteenth.

# Book XV

Begins by setting forth briefly and in sum the contents of the previous fourteen books. The argument is then shown to have reached so far as to allow of our now inquiring concerning the Trinity, which is God, in those eternal, incorporeal, and unchangeable things themselves, in the perfect contemplation of which a blessed life is promised to us. But this Trinity, as he shows, is here seen by us as by a mirror and in an enigma, in that it is seen by means of the image of God, which we are, as in a likeness that is obscure and hard of discernment. In like manner, it is shown, that some kind of conjecture and explanation may be gathered respecting the generation of the divine Word, from the word of our own mind, but only with difficulty, on account of the exceeding disparity which is discernible between the two words; and, again, respecting the procession of the Holy Spirit, from the love that is joined thereto by the will.

## CHAPTER 1

### GOD IS ABOVE THE MIND

1. Desiring to exercise the reader in the things that are made, in order that he may know Him by whom they are made, we have now advanced so far as to His image, which is man, in that wherein he excels the other animals, i.e. in reason or intelligence, and whatever else can be said of the rational or intellectual soul that pertains to what is called the mind. For by this name some Latin writers, after their own peculiar mode of speech, distinguish that which excels in man, and is not in the beast, from the soul, which is in the beast as well. If, then, we seek anything that is above this nature, and seek truly, it is God,—namely, a nature not created, but creating. And whether this is the Trinity, it is now our business to demonstrate not only to believers, by authority of divine Scripture, but also to such as understand,

by some kind of reason, if we can. And why I say, if we can, the thing itself will show better when we have begun to argue about it in our inquiry.

## CHAPTER 2

GOD, ALTHOUGH INCOMPREHENSIBLE, IS EVER TO BE SOUGHT. THE TRACES OF THE TRINITY ARE NOT VAINLY SOUGHT IN THE CREATURE

2. For God Himself, whom we seek, will, as I hope, help our labors, that they may not be unfruitful, and that we may understand how it is said in the holy Psalm, “Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and be strengthened: seek His face evermore.” For that which is always being sought seems as though it were never found; and how then will the heart of them that seek rejoice, and not rather be made sad, if they cannot find what they seek? For it is not said, The heart shall rejoice of them that find, but of them that seek, the Lord. And yet the prophet Isaiah testifies, that the Lord God can be found when He is sought, when he says: “Seek ye the Lord; and as soon as ye have found Him, call upon Him: and when He has drawn near to you, let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.” If, then, when sought, He can be found, why is it said, “Seek ye His face evermore?” Is He perhaps to be sought even when found? For things incomprehensible must so be investigated, as that no one may think he has found nothing, when he has been able to find how incomprehensible that is which he was seeking. Why then does he so seek, if he comprehends that which he seeks to be incomprehensible, unless because he may not give over seeking so long as he makes progress in the inquiry itself into things incomprehensible, and becomes ever better and better while seeking so great a good, which is both sought in order to be found, and found in order to be sought? For it is both sought in order that it may be found more sweetly, and found in order that it may be sought more eagerly. The words of Wisdom in the book of Ecclesiasticus may be taken in this meaning: “They who eat me shall still be hungry, and they who drink me shall still be thirsty.” For they eat and drink because they find; and they still continue seeking because they are hungry and thirst. Faith seeks, understanding finds; whence the prophet says, “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.” And yet, again, understanding still seeks Him, whom it finds; for “God looked down upon the sons of men,” as it is sung in the holy

Psalm, “to see if there were any that would understand, and seek after God.” And man, therefore, ought for this purpose to have understanding, that he may seek after God.

3. We shall have tarried then long enough among those things that God has made, in order that by them He Himself may be known that made them. “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” And hence they are rebuked in the book of Wisdom, “who could not out of the good things that are seen know Him that is: neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the workmaster; but deemed either fire, or wind, or the swift air or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven, to be the gods which govern the world: with whose beauty if they, being delighted, took them to be gods, let them know how much better the Lord of them is; for the first Author of beauty hath created them. But if they were astonished at their power and virtue, let them understand by them how much mightier He is that made them. For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the Maker of them is seen.” I have quoted these words from the book of Wisdom for this reason, that no one of the faithful may think me vainly and emptily to have sought first in the creature, step by step through certain trinities, each of their own appropriate kind, until I came at last to the mind of man, traces of that highest Trinity which we seek when we seek God.

## CHAPTER 3

### A BRIEF RECAPITULATION OF ALL THE PREVIOUS BOOKS

4. But since the necessities of our discussion and argument have compelled us to say a great many things in the course of fourteen books, which we cannot view at once in one glance, so as to be able to refer them quickly in thought to that which we desire to grasp, I will attempt, by the help of God, to the best of my power, to put briefly together, without arguing, whatever I have established in the several books by argument as known, and to place, as it were, under one mental view, not the way in which we have been convinced of each point, but the points themselves of which we have been convinced; in order that what follows may not be so far separated from that

which precedes, as that the perusal of the former shall produce forgetfulness of the latter; or at any rate, if it have produced such forgetfulness, that what has escaped the memory may be speedily recalled by re-perusal.

5. In the first book, the unity and equality of that highest Trinity is shown from Holy Scripture. In the second, and third, and fourth, the same: but a careful handling of the question respecting the sending of the Son and of the Holy Spirit has resulted in three books; and we have demonstrated, that He who is sent is not therefore less than He who sends because the one sent, the other was sent; since the Trinity, which is in all things equal, being also equally in its own nature unchangeable, and invisible, and everywhere present, works indivisibly. In the fifth,—with a view to those who think that the substance of the Father and of the Son is therefore not the same, because they suppose everything that is predicated of God to be predicated according to substance, and therefore contend that to beget and to be begotten, or to be begotten and unbegotten, as being diverse, are diverse substances,—it is demonstrated that not everything that is predicated of God is predicated according to substance, as He is called good and great according to substance, or anything else that is predicated of Him in respect to Himself, but that some things also are predicated relatively, i.e. not in respect to Himself, but in respect to something which is not Himself; as He is called the Father in respect to the Son, or the Lord in respect to the creature that serves Him; and that here, if anything thus relatively predicated, i.e. predicated in respect to something that is not Himself, is predicated also as in time, as, e.g., “Lord, Thou hast become our refuge,” then nothing happens to Him so as to work a change in Him, but He Himself continues altogether unchangeable in His own nature or essence. In the sixth, the question how Christ is called by the mouth of the apostle “the power of God and the wisdom of God,” is so far argued that the more careful handling of that question is deferred, viz. whether He from whom Christ is begotten is not wisdom Himself, but only the father of His own wisdom, or whether wisdom beget wisdom. But be it which it may, the equality of the Trinity became apparent in this book also, and that God was not triple, but a Trinity; and that the Father and the Son are not, as it were, a double as opposed to the single Holy Spirit: for therein three are not anything more than one. We considered, too, how to understand the words

of Bishop Hilary, “Eternity in the Father, form in the Image, use in the Gift.” In the seventh, the question is explained which had been deferred: in what way that God who begat the Son is not only Father of His own power and wisdom, but is Himself also power and wisdom; so, too, the Holy Spirit; and yet that they are not three powers or three wisdoms, but one power and one wisdom, as one God and one essence. It was next inquired, in what way they are called one essence, three persons, or by some Greeks one essence, three substances; and we found that the words were so used through the needs of speech, that there might be one term by which to answer, when it is asked what the three are, whom we truly confess to be three, viz. Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. In the eighth, it is made plain by reason also to those who understand, that not only the Father is not greater than the Son in the substance of truth, but that both together are not anything greater than the Holy Spirit alone, nor that any two at all in the same Trinity are anything greater than one, nor all three together anything greater than each severally. Next, I have pointed out, that by means of the truth, which is beheld by the understanding, and by means of the highest good, from which is all good, and by means of the righteousness for which a righteous mind is loved even by a mind not yet righteous, we might understand, so far as it is possible to understand, that not only incorporeal but also unchangeable nature which is God; and by means, too, of love, which in the Holy Scriptures is called God, by which, first of all, those who have understanding begin also, however feebly, to discern the Trinity, to wit, one that loves, and that which is loved, and love. In the ninth, the argument advances as far as to the image of God, viz. man in respect to his mind; and in this we found a kind of trinity, i.e. the mind, and the knowledge whereby the mind knows itself, and the love whereby it loves both itself and its knowledge of itself; and these three are shown to be mutually equal, and of one essence. In the tenth, the same subject is more carefully and subtly handled, and is brought to this point, that we found in the mind a still more manifest trinity of the mind, viz. in memory, and understanding, and will. But since it turned out also, that the mind could never be in such a case as not to remember, understand, and love itself, although it did not always think of itself; but that when it did think of itself, it did not in the same act of thought distinguish itself from things corporeal; the argument respecting the Trinity, of which this is an image, was deferred,



in order to find a trinity also in the things themselves that are seen with the body, and to exercise the reader's attention more distinctly in that. Accordingly, in the eleventh, we chose the sense of sight, wherein that which should have been there found to hold good might be recognized also in the other four bodily senses, although not expressly mentioned; and so a trinity of the outer man first showed itself in those things which are discerned from without, to wit, from the bodily object which is seen, and from the form which is thence impressed upon the eye of the beholder, and from the purpose of the will combining the two. But these three things, as was patent, were not mutually equal and of one substance. Next, we found yet another trinity in the mind itself, introduced into it, as it were, by the things perceived from without; wherein the same three things, as it appeared, were of one substance: the image of the bodily object which is in the memory, and the form thence impressed when the mind's eye of the thinker is turned to it, and the purpose of the will combining the two. But we found this trinity to pertain to the outer man, on this account, that it was introduced into the mind from bodily objects which are perceived from without. In the twelfth, we thought good to distinguish wisdom from knowledge, and to seek first, as being the lower of the two, a kind of appropriate and special trinity in that which is specially called knowledge; but that although we have got now in this to something pertaining to the inner man, yet it is not yet to be either called or thought an image of God. And this is discussed in the thirteenth book by the commendation of Christian faith. In the fourteenth we discuss the true wisdom of man, viz. that which is granted him by God's gift in the partaking of that very God Himself, which is distinct from knowledge; and the discussion reached this point, that a trinity is discovered in the image of God, which is man in respect to his mind, which mind is "renewed in the knowledge" of God, "after the image of Him that created" man; "after His own image;" and so obtains wisdom, wherein is the contemplation of things eternal.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### WHAT UNIVERSAL NATURE TEACHES US CONCERNING GOD

6. Let us, then, now seek the Trinity which is God, in the things themselves that are eternal, incorporeal, and unchangeable; in the perfect contemplation

of which a blessed life is promised us, which cannot be other than eternal. For not only does the authority of the divine books declare that God is; but the whole nature of the universe itself which surrounds us, and to which we also belong, proclaims that it has a most excellent Creator, who has given to us a mind and natural reason, whereby to see that things living are to be preferred to things that are not living; things that have sense to things that have not; things that have understanding to things that have not; things immortal to things mortal; things powerful to things impotent; things righteous to things unrighteous; things beautiful to things deformed; things good to things evil; things incorruptible to things corruptible; things unchangeable to things changeable; things invisible to things visible; things incorporeal to things corporeal; things blessed to things miserable. And hence, since without doubt we place the Creator above things created, we must needs confess that the Creator both lives in the highest sense, and perceives and understands all things, and that He cannot die, or suffer decay, or be changed; and that He is not a body, but a spirit, of all the most powerful, most righteous, most beautiful, most good, most blessed.

## CHAPTER 5

### HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO DEMONSTRATE THE TRINITY BY NATURAL REASON

7. But all that I have said, and whatever else seems to be worthily said of God after the like fashion of human speech, applies to the whole Trinity, which is one God, and to the several Persons in that Trinity. For who would dare to say either of the one God, which is the Trinity itself, or of the Father, or Son, or Holy Spirit, either that He is not living, or is without sense or intelligence; or that, in that nature in which they are affirmed to be mutually equal, any one of them is mortal, or corruptible, or changeable, or corporeal? Or is there any one who would deny that any one in the Trinity is most powerful, most righteous, most beautiful, most good, most blessed? If, then, these things, and all others of the kind, can be predicated both of the Trinity itself, and of each several one in that Trinity, where or how shall the Trinity manifest itself? Let us therefore first reduce these numerous predicates to some limited number. For that which is called life in God, is itself His essence and nature. God, therefore, does not live, unless by the life which He is to Himself. And this life is not such as that which is in a

tree, wherein is neither understanding nor sense; nor such as is in a beast, for the life of a beast possesses the fivefold sense, but has no understanding. But the life which is God perceives and understands all things, and perceives by mind, not by body, because “God is a spirit.” And God does not perceive through a body, as animals do, which have bodies, for He does not consist of soul and body. And hence that single nature perceives as it understands, and understands as it perceives, and its sense and understanding are one and the same. Nor yet so, that at any time He should either cease or begin to be; for He is immortal. And it is not said of Him in vain, that “He only hath immortality.” For immortality is true immortality in His case whose nature admits no change. That is also true eternity by which God is unchangeable, without beginning, without end; consequently also incorruptible. It is one and the same thing, therefore, to call God eternal, or immortal, or incorruptible, or unchangeable; and it is likewise one and the same thing to say that He is living, and that He is intelligent, that is, in truth, wise. For He did not receive wisdom whereby to be wise, but He is Himself wisdom. And this is life, and again is power or might, and yet again beauty, whereby He is called powerful and beautiful. For what is more powerful and more beautiful than wisdom, “which reaches from end to end mightily, and sweetly disposes all things”? Or do goodness, again, and righteousness, differ from each other in the nature of God, as they differ in His works, as though they were two diverse qualities of God—goodness one, and righteousness another? Certainly not; but that which is righteousness is also itself goodness; and that which is goodness is also itself blessedness. And God is therefore called incorporeal, that He may be believed and understood to be a spirit, not a body.

8. Further, if we say, Eternal, immortal, incorruptible, unchangeable, living, wise, powerful, beautiful, righteous, good, blessed spirit; only the last of this list as it were seems to signify substance, but the rest to signify qualities of that substance; but it is not so in that ineffable and simple nature. For whatever seems to be predicated therein according to quality, is to be understood according to substance or essence. For far be it from us to predicate spirit of God according to substance, and good according to quality; but both according to substance. And so in like manner of all those we have mentioned, of which we have already spoken at length in the

former books. Let us choose, then, one of the first four of those in our enumeration and arrangement, i.e. eternal, immortal, incorruptible, unchangeable; since these four, as I have argued already, have one meaning; in order that our aim may not be distracted by a multiplicity of objects. And let it be rather that which was placed first, viz. eternal. Let us follow the same course with the four that come next, viz. living, wise, powerful, beautiful. And since life of some sort belongs also to the beast, which has not wisdom; while the next two, viz. wisdom and might, are so compared to one another in the case of man, as that Scripture says, “Better is he that is wise than he that is strong;” and beauty, again, is commonly attributed to bodily objects also: out of these four that we have chosen, let Wise be the one we take. Although these four are not to be called unequal in speaking of God; for they are four names, but one thing. But of the third and last four,—although it is the same thing in God to be righteous that it is to be good or to be blessed; and the same thing to be a spirit that it is to be righteous, and good, and blessed; yet, because in men there can be a spirit that is not blessed, and there can be one both righteous and good, but not yet blessed; but that which is blessed is doubtless both just, and good, and a spirit,—let us rather choose that one which cannot exist even in men without the three others, viz. blessed.

## CHAPTER 6

HOW THERE IS A TRINITY IN THE VERY SIMPLICITY OF GOD. WHETHER AND HOW THE TRINITY THAT IS GOD IS MANIFESTED FROM THE TRINITIES WHICH HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO BE IN MEN

9. When, then, we say, Eternal, wise, blessed, are these three the Trinity that is called God? We reduce, indeed, those twelve to this small number of three; but perhaps we can go further, and reduce these three also to one of them. For if wisdom and might, or life and wisdom, can be one and the same thing in the nature of God, why cannot eternity and wisdom, or blessedness and wisdom, be one and the same thing in the nature of God? And hence, as it made no difference whether we spoke of these twelve or of those three when we reduced the many to the small number; so does it make no difference whether we speak of those three, or of that one, to the singularity of which we have shown that the other two of the three may be

reduced. What fashion, then, of argument, what possible force and might of understanding, what liveliness of reason, what sharp-sightedness of thought, will set forth how (to pass over now the others) this one thing, that God is called wisdom, is a trinity? For God does not receive wisdom from any one as we receive it from Him, but He is Himself His own wisdom; because His wisdom is not one thing, and His essence another, seeing that to Him to be wise is to be. Christ, indeed, is called in the Holy Scriptures, “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” But we have discussed in the seventh book how this is to be understood, so that the Son may not seem to make the Father wise; and our explanation came to this, that the Son is wisdom of wisdom, in the same way as He is light of light, God of God. Nor could we find the Holy Spirit to be in any other way than that He Himself also is wisdom, and altogether one wisdom, as one God, one essence. How, then, do we understand this wisdom, which is God, to be a trinity? I do not say, How do we believe this? For among the faithful this ought to admit no question. But supposing there is any way by which we can see with the understanding what we believe, what is that way?

10. For if we recall where it was in these books that a trinity first began to show itself to our understanding, the eighth book is that which occurs to us; since it was there that to the best of our power we tried to raise the aim of the mind to understand that most excellent and unchangeable nature, which our mind is not. And we so contemplated this nature as to think of it as not far from us, and as above us, not in place, but by its own awful and wonderful excellence, and in such wise that it appeared to be with us by its own present light. Yet in this no trinity was yet manifest to us, because in that blaze of light we did not keep the eye of the mind steadfastly bent upon seeking it; only we discerned it in a sense, because there was no bulk wherein we must needs think the magnitude of two or three to be more than that of one. But when we came to treat of love, which in the Holy Scriptures is called God, then a trinity began to dawn upon us a little, i.e. one that loves, and that which is loved, and love. But because that ineffable light beat back our gaze, and it became in some degree plain that the weakness of our mind could not as yet be tempered to it, we turned back in the midst of the course we had begun, and planned according to the (as it were) more familiar consideration of our own mind, according to which man is made

after the image of God, in order to relieve our overstrained attention; and thereupon we dwelt from the ninth to the fourteenth book upon the consideration of the creature, which we are, that we might be able to understand and behold the invisible things of God by those things which are made. And now that we have exercised the understanding, as far as was needful, or perhaps more than was needful, in lower things, lo! we wish, but have not strength, to raise ourselves to behold that highest Trinity which is God. For in such manner as we see most undoubted trinities, whether those which are wrought from without by corporeal things, or when these same things are thought of which were perceived from without; or when those things which take their rise in the mind, and do not pertain to the senses of the body, as faith, or as the virtues which comprise the art of living, are discerned by manifest reason, and, held fast by knowledge; or when the mind itself, by which we know whatever we truly say that we know, is known to itself, or thinks of itself; or when that mind beholds anything eternal and unchangeable, which itself is not;—in such way, then, I say, as we see in all these instances most undoubted trinities, because they are wrought in ourselves, or are in ourselves, when we remember, look at, or desire these things;—do we, I say, in such manner also see the Trinity that is God; because there also, by the understanding, we behold both Him as it were speaking, and His Word, i.e. the Father and the Son; and then, proceeding thence, the love common to both, namely, the Holy Spirit? These trinities that pertain to our senses or to our mind, do we rather see than believe them, but rather believe than see that God is a trinity? But if this is so, then doubtless we either do not at all understand and behold the invisible things of God by those things that are made, or if we behold them at all, we do not behold the Trinity in them; and there is therein somewhat to behold, and somewhat also which we ought to believe, even though not beheld. And as the eighth book showed that we behold the unchangeable good which we are not, so the fourteenth reminded us thereof, when we spoke of the wisdom that man has from God. Why, then, do we not recognize the Trinity therein? Does that wisdom which God is said to be, not perceive itself, and not love itself? Who would say this? Or who is there that does not see, that where there is no knowledge, there in no way is there wisdom? Or are we, in truth, to think that the Wisdom which is God knows other things, and does not know itself; or loves other things, and does not

love itself? But if this is a foolish and impious thing to say or believe, then behold we have a trinity,—to wit, wisdom, and the knowledge wisdom has of itself, and its love of itself. For so, too, we find a trinity in man also, i.e. mind, and the knowledge wherewith mind knows itself, and the love wherewith it loves itself.

## CHAPTER 7

THAT IT IS NOT EASY TO DISCOVER THE TRINITY THAT IS GOD FROM THE TRINITIES WE HAVE SPOKEN OF

11. But these three are in such way in man, that they are not themselves man. For man, as the ancients defined him, is a rational mortal animal. These things, therefore, are the chief things in man, but are not man themselves. And any one person, i.e. each individual man, has these three things in his mind. But if, again, we were so to define man as to say, Man is a rational substance consisting of mind and body, then without doubt man has a soul that is not body, and a body that is not soul. And hence these three things are not man, but belong to man, or are in man. If, again, we put aside the body, and think of the soul by itself, the mind is somewhat belonging to the soul, as though its head, or eye, or countenance; but these things are not to be regarded as bodies. It is not then the soul, but that which is chief in the soul, that is called the mind. But can we say that the Trinity is in such way in God, as to be somewhat belonging to God, and not itself God? And hence each individual man, who is called the image of God, not according to all things that pertain to his nature, but according to his mind alone, is one person, and is an image of the Trinity in his mind. But that Trinity of which he is the image is nothing else in its totality than God, is nothing else in its totality than the Trinity. Nor does anything pertain to the nature of God so as not to pertain to that Trinity; and the Three Persons are of one essence, not as each individual man is one person.

12. There is, again, a wide difference in this point likewise, that whether we speak of the mind in a man, and of its knowledge and love; or of memory, understanding, will,—we remember nothing of the mind except by memory, nor understand anything except by understanding, nor love anything except by will. But in that Trinity, who would dare to say that the Father

understands neither Himself, nor the Son, nor the Holy Spirit, except by the Son, or loves them except by the Holy Spirit; and that He remembers only by Himself either Himself, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; and in the same way that the Son remembers neither Himself nor the Father, except by the Father, nor loves them except by the Holy Spirit; but that by Himself He only understands both the Father and Son and Holy Spirit: and in like manner, that the Holy Spirit by the Father remembers both the Father and the Son and Himself, and by the Son understands both the Father and the Son and Himself; but by Himself only loves both Himself and the Father and the Son;—as though the Father were both His own memory, and that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; and the Son were the understanding of both Himself, and the Father and the Holy Spirit; but the Holy Spirit were the love both of Himself, and of the Father and of the Son? Who would presume to think or affirm this of that Trinity? For if therein the Son alone understands both for Himself and for the Father and for the Holy Spirit, we have returned to the old absurdity, that the Father is not wise from Himself, but from the Son, and that wisdom has not begotten wisdom, but that the Father is said to be wise by that wisdom which He begat. For where there is no understanding there can be no wisdom; and hence, if the Father does not understand Himself for Himself, but the Son understands for the Father, assuredly the Son makes the Father wise. But if to God to be is to be wise, and essence is to Him the same as wisdom, then it is not the Son that has His essence from the Father, which is the truth, but rather the Father from the Son, which is a most absurd falsehood. And this absurdity, beyond all doubt, we have discussed, disproved, and rejected, in the seventh book. Therefore God the Father is wise by that wisdom by which He is His own wisdom, and the Son is the wisdom of the Father from the wisdom which is the Father, from whom the Son is begotten; whence it follows that the Father understands also by that understanding by which He is His own understanding (for he could not be Wise that did not understand); and that the Son is the understanding of the Father, begotten of the understanding which is the Father. And this same may not be unfitly said of memory also. For how is he wise, that remembers nothing, or does not remember himself? Accordingly, since the Father is wisdom, and the Son is wisdom, therefore, as the Father remembers Himself, so does the Son also remember Himself; and as the Father remembers both Himself and the Son, not by the memory



of the Son, but by His own, so does the Son remember both Himself and the Father, not by the memory of the Father, but by His own. Where, again, there is no love, who would say there was any wisdom? And hence we must infer that the Father is in such way His own love, as He is His own understanding and memory. And therefore these three, i.e. memory, understanding, love or will in that highest and unchangeable essence which is God, are, we see, not the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, but the Father alone. And because the Son too is wisdom begotten of wisdom, as neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit understands for Him, but He understands for Himself; so neither does the Father remember for Him, nor the Holy Spirit love for Him, but He remembers and loves for Himself: for He is Himself also His own memory, His own understanding, and His own love. But that He is so comes to Him from the Father, of whom He is born. And because the Holy Spirit also is wisdom proceeding from wisdom, He too has not the Father for a memory, and the Son for an understanding, and Himself for love: for He would not be wisdom if another remembered for Him, and yet another understood for Him, and He only loved for Himself; but Himself has all three things, and has them in such way that they are Himself. But that He is so comes to Him thence, whence He proceeds.

13. What man, then, is there who can comprehend that wisdom by which God knows all things, in such wise that neither what we call things past are past therein, nor what we call things future are therein waited for as coming, as though they were absent, but both past and future with things present are all present; nor yet are things thought severally, so that thought passes from one to another, but all things simultaneously are at hand in one glance;—what man, I say, is there that comprehends that wisdom, and the like prudence, and the like knowledge, since in truth even our own wisdom is beyond our comprehension? For somehow we are able to behold the things that are present to our senses or to our understanding; but the things that are absent, and yet have once been present, we know by memory, if we have not forgotten them. And we conjecture, too, not the past from the future, but the future from the past, yet by all unstable knowledge. For there are some of our thoughts to which, although future, we, as it were, look onward with greater plainness and certainty as being very near; and we do this by the means of memory when we are able to do it, as much as we ever are able,

although memory seems to belong not to the future, but to the past. And this may be tried in the case of any words or songs, the due order of which we are rendering by memory; for we certainly should not utter each in succession, unless we foresaw in thought what came next. And yet it is not foresight, but memory, that enables us to foresee it; for up to the very end of the words or the song, nothing is uttered except as foreseen and looked forward to. And yet in doing this, we are not said to speak or sing by foresight, but by memory; and if any one is more than commonly capable of uttering many pieces in this way, he is usually praised, not for his foresight, but for his memory. We know, and are absolutely certain, that all this takes place in our mind or by our mind; but how it takes place, the more attentively we desire to scrutinize, the more do both our very words break down, and our purpose itself fails, when by our understanding, if not our tongue, we would reach to something of clearness. And do such as we are, think, that in so great infirmity of mind we can comprehend whether the foresight of God is the same as His memory and His understanding, who does not regard in thought each several thing, but embraces all that He knows in one eternal and unchangeable and ineffable vision? In this difficulty, then, and strait, we may well cry out to the living God, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it.” For I understand by myself how wonderful and incomprehensible is Thy knowledge, by which Thou madest me, when I cannot even comprehend myself whom Thou hast made! And yet, “while I was musing, the fire burned,” so that “I seek Thy face evermore.”

## CHAPTER 8

### HOW THE APOSTLE SAYS THAT GOD IS NOW SEEN BY US THROUGH A GLASS

14. I know that wisdom is an incorporeal substance, and that it is the light by which those things are seen that are not seen by carnal eyes; and yet a man so great and so spiritual [as Paul] says, “We see now through a glass, in an enigma, but then face to face.” If we ask what and of what sort is this “glass,” this assuredly occurs to our minds, that in a glass nothing is discerned but an image. We have endeavored, then, so to do; in order that we might see in some way or other by this image which we are, Him by whom we are made, as by a glass. And this is intimated also in the words of

the same apostle: "But we with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "Beholding as in a glass," he has said, i.e. seeing by means of a glass, not looking from a watch-tower: an ambiguity that does not exist in the Greek language, whence the apostolic epistles have been rendered into Latin. For in Greek, a glass, in which the images of things are visible, is wholly distinct in the sound of the word also from a watch-tower, from the height of which we command a more distant view. And it is quite plain that the apostle, in using the word "speculantes" in respect to the glory of the Lord, meant it to come from "speculum," not from "specula." But where he says, "We are transformed into the same image," he assuredly means to speak of the image of God; and by calling it "the same," he means that very image which we see in the glass, because that same image is also the glory of the Lord; as he says elsewhere, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God,"—a text already discussed in the twelfth book. He means, then, by "We are transformed," that we are changed from one form to another, and that we pass from a form that is obscure to a form that is bright: since the obscure form, too, is the image of God; and if an image, then assuredly also "glory," in which we are created as men, being better than the other animals. For it is said of human nature in itself, "The man ought not to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God." And this nature, being the most excellent among things created, is transformed from a form that is defaced into a form that is beautiful, when it is justified by its own Creator from ungodliness. Since even in ungodliness itself, the more the faultiness is to be condemned, the more certainly is the nature to be praised. And therefore he has added, "from glory to glory:" from the glory of creation to the glory of justification. Although these words, "from glory to glory," may be understood also in other ways;—from the glory of faith to the glory of sight, from the glory whereby we are sons of God to the glory whereby we shall be like Him, because "we shall see Him as He is." But in that he has added "as from the Spirit of the Lord," he declares that the blessing of so desirable a transformation is conferred upon us by the grace of God.

## CHAPTER 9

### OF THE TERM “ENIGMA,” AND OF TROPICAL MODES OF SPEECH

15. What has been said relates to the words of the apostle, that “we see now through a glass;” but whereas he has added, “in an enigma,” the meaning of this addition is unknown to any who are unacquainted with the books that contain the doctrine of those modes of speech, which the Greeks call Tropes, which Greek word we also use in Latin. For as we more commonly speak of schemata than of figures, so we more commonly speak of tropes than of modes. And it is a very difficult and uncommon thing to express the names of the several modes or tropes in Latin, so as to refer its appropriate name to each. And hence some Latin translators, through unwillingness to employ a Greek word, where the apostle says, “Which things are an allegory,” have rendered it by a circumlocution—Which things signify one thing by another. But there are several species of this kind of trope that is called allegory, and one of them is that which is called enigma. Now the definition of the generic term must necessarily embrace also all its species; and hence, as every horse is an animal, but not every animal is a horse, so every enigma is an allegory, but every allegory is not an enigma. What then is an allegory, but a trope wherein one thing is understood from another? as in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, “Let us not therefore sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober: for they who sleep, sleep in the night; and they who are drunken, are drunken in the night: but let us who are of the day, be sober.” But this allegory is not an enigma. for here the meaning is patent to all but the very dull; but an enigma is, to explain it briefly, an obscure allegory, as, e.g., “The horseleech had three daughters,” and other like instances. But when the apostle spoke of an allegory, he does not find it in the words, but in the fact; since he has shown that the two Testaments are to be understood by the two sons of Abraham, one by a bondmaid, and the other by a free woman, which was a thing not said, but also done. And before this was explained, it was obscure; and accordingly such an allegory, which is the generic name, could be specifically called an enigma.

16. But because it is not only those that are ignorant of the books that contain the doctrine of tropes, who inquire the apostle’s meaning, when he said that we “see now in an enigma,” but those, too, who are acquainted

with the doctrine, but yet desire to know what that enigma is in which “we now see;” we must find a single meaning for the two phrases, viz. for that which says, “we see now through a glass,” and for that which adds, “in an enigma.” For it makes but one sentence, when the whole is so uttered, “We see now through a glass in an enigma.” Accordingly, as far as my judgment goes, as by the word glass he meant to signify an image, so by that of enigma any likeness you will, but yet one obscure, and difficult to see through. While, therefore, any likenesses whatever may be understood as signified by the apostle when he speaks of a glass and an enigma, so that they are adapted to the understanding of God, in such way as He can be understood; yet nothing is better adapted to this purpose than that which is not vainly called His image. Let no one, then, wonder, that we labor to see in any way at all, even in that fashion of seeing which is granted to us in this life, viz. through a glass, in an enigma. For we should not hear of an enigma in this place if sight were easy. And this is a yet greater enigma, that we do not see what we cannot but see. For who does not see his own thought? And yet who does see his own thought, I do not say with the eye of the flesh, but with the inner sight itself? Who does not see it, and who does see it? Since thought is a kind of sight of the mind; whether those things are present which are seen also by the bodily eyes, or perceived by the other senses; or whether they are not present, but their likenesses are discerned by thought; or whether neither of these is the case, but things are thought of that are neither bodily things nor likenesses of bodily things, as the virtues and vices; or as, indeed, thought itself is thought of; or whether it be those things which are the subjects of instruction and of liberal sciences; or whether the higher causes and reasons themselves of all these things in the unchangeable nature are thought of; or whether it be even evil, and vain, and false things that we are thinking of, with either the sense not consenting, or erring in its consent.

## CHAPTER 10

### CONCERNING THE WORD OF THE MIND, IN WHICH WE SEE THE WORD OF GOD, AS IN A GLASS AND AN ENIGMA

17. But let us now speak of those things of which we think as known, and have in our knowledge even if we do not think of them; whether they

belong to the contemplative knowledge, which, as I have argued, is properly to be called wisdom, or to the active which is properly to be called knowledge. For both together belong to one mind, and are one image of God. But when we treat of the lower of the two distinctly and separately, then it is not to be called an image of God, although even then, too, some likeness of that Trinity may be found in it; as we showed in the thirteenth book. We speak now, therefore, of the entire knowledge of man altogether, in which whatever is known to us is known; that, at any rate, which is true; otherwise it would not be known. For no one knows what is false, except when he knows it to be false; and if he knows this, then he knows what is true: for it is true that that is false. We treat, therefore, now of those things which we think as known, and which are known to us even if they are not being thought of. But certainly, if we would utter them in words, we can only do so by thinking them. For although there were no words spoken, at any rate, he who thinks speaks in his heart. And hence that passage in the book of Wisdom: "They said within themselves, thinking not aright." For the words, "They said within themselves," are explained by the addition of "thinking." A like passage to this is that in the Gospel,—that certain scribes, when they heard the Lord's words to the paralytic man, "Be of good cheer, my son, thy sins are forgiven thee," said within themselves, "This man blasphemeth." For how did they "say within themselves," except by thinking? Then follows, "And when Jesus saw their thoughts, He said, Why think ye evil in your thoughts?" So far Matthew. But Luke narrates the same thing thus: "The scribes and Pharisees began to think, saying, Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He, answering, said unto them, What think ye in your hearts?" That which in the book of Wisdom is, "They said, thinking," is the same here with, "They thought, saying." For both there and here it is declared, that they spake within themselves, and in their own heart, i.e. spake by thinking. For they "spake within themselves," and it was said to them, "What think ye?" And the Lord Himself says of that rich man whose ground brought forth plentifully, "And he thought within himself, saying."

18. Some thoughts, then, are speeches of the heart, wherein the Lord also shows that there is a mouth, when He says, "Not that which entereth into

the mouth defileth a man; but that which proceedeth out of the mouth, that defileth a man.” In one sentence He has comprised two diverse mouths of the man, one of the body, one of the heart. For assuredly, that from which they thought the man to be defiled, enters into the mouth of the body; but that from which the Lord said the man was defiled, proceedeth out of the mouth of the heart. So certainly He Himself explained what He had said. For a little after, He says also to His disciples concerning the same thing: “Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?” Here He most certainly pointed to the mouth of the body. But in that which follows He plainly speaks of the mouth of the heart, where He says, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,” etc. What is clearer than this explanation? And yet, when we call thoughts speeches of the heart, it does not follow that they are not also acts of sight, arising from the sight of knowledge, when they are true. For when these things are done outwardly by means of the body, then speech and sight are different things; but when we think inwardly, the two are one,—just as sight and hearing are two things mutually distinct in the bodily senses, but to see and hear are the same thing in the mind; and hence, while speech is not seen but rather heard outwardly, yet the inward speeches, i.e. thoughts, are said by the holy Gospel to have been seen, not heard, by the Lord. “They said within themselves, This man blasphemeth,” says the Gospel; and then subjoined, “And when Jesus saw their thoughts.” Therefore He saw, what they said. For by His own thought He saw their thoughts, which they supposed no one saw but themselves.

19. Whoever, then, is able to understand a word, not only before it is uttered in sound, but also before the images of its sounds are considered in thought,—for this it is which belongs to no tongue, to wit, of those which are called the tongues of nations, of which our Latin tongue is one;—whoever, I say, is able to understand this, is able now to see through this glass and in this enigma some likeness of that Word of whom it is said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” For of necessity, when we speak what is true, i.e. speak what we know, there is born from the knowledge itself which the memory retains, a word that is

altogether of the same kind with that knowledge from which it is born. For the thought that is formed by the thing which we know, is the word which we speak in the heart: which word is neither Greek nor Latin, nor of any other tongue. But when it is needful to convey this to the knowledge of those to whom we speak, then some sign is assumed whereby to signify it. And generally a sound, sometimes a nod, is exhibited, the former to the ears, the latter to the eyes, that the word which we bear in our mind may become known also by bodily signs to the bodily senses. For what is to nod or beckon, except to speak in some way to the sight? And Holy Scripture gives its testimony to this; for we read in the Gospel according to John: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one upon another, doubting of whom He spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus’ breast one of His disciples whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckons to him, and says to him, Who is it of whom He speaks?” Here he spoke by beckoning what he did not venture to speak by sounds. But whereas we exhibit these and the like bodily signs either to ears or eyes of persons present to whom we speak, letters have been invented that we might be able to converse also with the absent; but these are signs of words, as words themselves are signs in our conversation of those things which we think.

## CHAPTER 11

THE LIKENESS OF THE DIVINE WORD, SUCH AS IT IS, IS TO BE SOUGHT, NOT IN OUR OWN OUTER AND SENSIBLE WORD, BUT IN THE INNER AND MENTAL ONE. THERE IS THE GREATEST POSSIBLE UNLIKENESS BETWEEN OUR WORD AND KNOWLEDGE AND THE DIVINE WORD AND KNOWLEDGE

20. Accordingly, the word that sounds outwardly is the sign of the word that gives light inwardly; which latter has the greater claim to be called a word. For that which is uttered with the mouth of the flesh, is the articulate sound of a word; and is itself also called a word, on account of that to make which outwardly apparent it is itself assumed. For our word is so made in some way into an articulate sound of the body, by assuming that articulate sound by which it may be manifested to men’s senses, as the Word of God was made flesh, by assuming that flesh in which itself also might be manifested to men’s senses. And as our word becomes an articulate sound, yet is not



changed into one; so the Word of God became flesh, but far be it from us to say He was changed into flesh. For both that word of ours became an articulate sound, and that other Word became flesh, by assuming it, not by consuming itself so as to be changed into it. And therefore whoever desires to arrive at any likeness, be it of what sort it may, of the Word of God, however in many respects unlike, must not regard the word of ours that sounds in the ears, either when it is uttered in an articulate sound or when it is silently thought. For the words of all tongues that are uttered in sound are also silently thought, and the mind runs over verses while the bodily mouth is silent. And not only the numbers of syllables, but the tunes also of songs, since they are corporeal, and pertain to that sense of the body which is called hearing, are at hand by certain incorporeal images appropriate to them, to those who think of them, and who silently revolve all these things. But we must pass by this, in order to arrive at that word of man, by the likeness of which, be it of what sort it may, the Word of God may be somehow seen as in an enigma. Not that word which was spoken to this or that prophet, and of which it is said, “Now the word of God grew and multiplied;” and again, “Faith then cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ;” and again, “When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men but, as it is in truth, the word of God” (and there are countless other like sayings in the Scriptures respecting the word of God, which is disseminated in the sounds of many and diverse languages through the hearts and mouths of men; and which is therefore called the word of God, because the doctrine that is delivered is not human, but divine);—but we are now seeking to see, in whatsoever way we can, by means of this likeness, that Word of God of which it is said, “The Word was God;” of which it is said, “All things were made by Him;” of which it is said, “The Word became flesh;” of which it is said “The Word of God on high is the fountain of wisdom.” We must go on, then, to that word of man, to the word of the rational animal, to the word of that image of God, that is not born of God, but made by God; which is neither utterable in sound nor capable of being thought under the likeness of sound such as must needs be with the word of any tongue; but which precedes all the signs by which it is signified, and is begotten from the knowledge that continues in the mind, when that same knowledge is spoken inwardly according as it really is. For the sight of thinking is exceedingly like the sight of

knowledge. For when it is uttered by sound, or by any bodily sign, it is not uttered according as it really is, but as it can be seen or heard by the body. When, therefore, that is in the word which is in the knowledge, then there is a true word, and truth, such as is looked for from man; such that what is in the knowledge is also in the word, and what is not in the knowledge is also not in the word. Here may be recognized, “Yea, yea; nay, nay.” And so this likeness of the image that is made, approaches as nearly as is possible to that likeness of the image that is born, by which God the Son is declared to be in all things like in substance to the Father. We must notice in this enigma also another likeness of the word of God; viz. that, as it is said of that Word, “All things were made by Him,” where God is declared to have made the universe by His only-begotten Son, so there are no works of man that are not first spoken in his heart: whence it is written, “A word is the beginning of every work.” But here also, it is when the word is true, that then it is the beginning of a good work. And a word is true when it is begotten from the knowledge of working good works, so that there too may be preserved the “yea yea, nay nay;” in order that whatever is in that knowledge by which we are to live, may be also in the word by which we are to work, and whatever is not in the one may not be in the other. Otherwise such a word will be a lie, not truth; and what comes thence will be a sin, and not a good work. There is yet this other likeness of the Word of God in this likeness of our word, that there can be a word of ours with no work following it, but there cannot be any work unless a word precedes; just as the Word of God could have existed though no creature existed, but no creature could exist unless by that Word by which all things are made. And therefore not God the Father, not the Holy Spirit, not the Trinity itself, but the Son only, which is the Word of God, was made flesh; although the Trinity was the maker: in order that we might live rightly through our word following and imitating His example, i.e. by having no lie in either the thought or the work of our word. But this perfection of this image is one to be at some time hereafter. In order to attain this it is that the good master teaches us by Christian faith, and by pious doctrine, that “with face unveiled” from the veil of the law, which is the shadow of things to come, “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,” i.e. gazing at it through a glass, “we may be transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord;” as we explained above.

21. When, therefore, this image shall have been renewed to perfection by this transformation, then we shall be like God, because we shall see Him, not through a glass, but “as He is;” which the Apostle Paul expresses by “face to face.” But now, who can explain how great is the unlikeness also, in this glass, in this enigma, in this likeness such as it is? Yet I will touch upon some points, as I can, by which to indicate it.

## CHAPTER 12

### THE ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY

First, of what sort and how great is the very knowledge itself that a man can attain, be he ever so skillful and learned, by which our thought is formed with truth, when we speak what we know? For to pass by those things that come into the mind from the bodily senses, among which so many are otherwise than they seem to be, that he who is overmuch pressed down by their resemblance to truth, seems sane to himself, but really is not sane;—whence it is that the Academic philosophy has so prevailed as to be still more wretchedly insane by doubting all things;—passing by, then, those things that come into the mind by the bodily senses, how large a proportion is left of things which we know in such manner as we know that we live? In regard to this, indeed, we are absolutely without any fear lest perchance we are being deceived by some resemblance of the truth; since it is certain, that he who is deceived, yet lives. And this again is not reckoned among those objects of sight that are presented from without, so that the eye may be deceived in it; in such way as it is when an oar in the water looks bent, and towers seem to move as you sail past them, and a thousand other things that are otherwise than they seem to be: for this is not a thing that is discerned by the eye of the flesh. The knowledge by which we know that we live is the most inward of all knowledge, of which even the Academic cannot insinuate: Perhaps you are asleep, and do not know it, and you see things in your sleep. For who does not know that what people see in dreams is precisely like what they see when awake? But he who is certain of the knowledge of his own life, does not therein say, I know I am awake, but, I know I am alive; therefore, whether he be asleep or awake, he is alive. Nor can he be deceived in that knowledge by dreams; since it belongs to a living man both to sleep and to see in sleep. Nor can the Academic again say, in

confutation of this knowledge: Perhaps you are mad, and do not know it: for what madmen see is precisely like what they also see who are sane; but he who is mad is alive. Nor does he answer the Academic by saying, I know I am not mad, but, I know I am alive. Therefore he who says he knows he is alive, can neither be deceived nor lie. Let a thousand kinds, then, of deceitful objects of sight be presented to him who says, I know I am alive; yet he will fear none of them, for he who is deceived yet is alive. But if such things alone pertain to human knowledge, they are very few indeed; unless that they can be so multiplied in each kind, as not only not to be few, but to reach in the result to infinity. For he who says, I know I am alive, says that he knows one single thing. Further, if he says, I know that I know I am alive, now there are two; but that he knows these two is a third thing to know. And so he can add a fourth and a fifth, and innumerable others, if he holds out. But since he cannot either comprehend an innumerable number by additions of units, or say a thing innumerable times, he comprehends this at least, and with perfect certainty, viz. that this is both true and so innumerable that he cannot truly comprehend and say its infinite number. This same thing may be noticed also in the case of a will that is certain. For it would be an impudent answer to make to any one who should say, I will to be happy, that perhaps you are deceived. And if he should say, I know that I will this, and I know that I know it, he can add yet a third to these two, viz. that he knows these two; and a fourth, that he knows that he knows these two; and so on ad infinitum. Likewise, if any one were to say, I will not to be mistaken; will it not be true, whether he is mistaken or whether he is not, that nevertheless he does will not to be mistaken? Would it not be most impudent to say to him, Perhaps you are deceived? when beyond doubt, whereinsoever he may be deceived, he is nevertheless not deceived in thinking that he wills not to be deceived. And if he says he knows this, he adds any number he chooses of things known, and perceives that number to be infinite. For he who says, I will not to be deceived, and I know that I will not to be so, and I know that I know it, is able now to set forth an infinite number here also, however awkward may be the expression of it. And other things too are to be found capable of refuting the Academics, who contend that man can know nothing. But we must restrict ourselves, especially as this is not the subject we have undertaken in the present work. There are three books of ours on that subject, written in the

early time of our conversion, which he who can and will read, and who understands them, will doubtless not be much moved by any of the many arguments which they have found out against the discovery of truth. For whereas there are two kinds of knowable things,—one, of those things which the mind perceives by the bodily senses; the other, of those which it perceives by itself,—these philosophers have babbled much against the bodily senses, but have never been able to throw doubt upon those most certain perceptions of things true, which the mind knows by itself, such as is that which I have mentioned, I know that I am alive. But far be it from us to doubt the truth of what we have learned by the bodily senses; since by them we have learned to know the heaven and the earth, and those things in them which are known to us, so far as He who created both us and them has willed them to be within our knowledge. Far be it from us too to deny, that we know what we have learned by the testimony of others: otherwise we know not that there is an ocean; we know not that the lands and cities exist which most copious report commends to us; we know not that those men were, and their works, which we have learned by reading history; we know not the news that is daily brought us from this quarter or that, and confirmed by consistent and conspiring evidence; lastly, we know not at what place or from whom we have been born: since in all these things we have believed the testimony of others. And if it is most absurd to say this, then we must confess, that not only our own senses, but those of other persons also, have added very much indeed to our knowledge.

22. All these things, then, both those which the human mind knows by itself, and those which it knows by the bodily senses, and those which it has received and knows by the testimony of others, are laid up and retained in the storehouse of the memory; and from these is begotten a word that is true when we speak what we know, but a word that is before all sound, before all thought of a sound. For the word is then most like to the thing known, from which also its image is begotten, since the sight of thinking arises from the sight of knowledge; when it is a word belonging to no tongue, but is a true word concerning a true thing, having nothing of its own, but wholly derived from that knowledge from which it is born. Nor does it signify when he learned it, who speaks what he knows; for sometimes he

says it immediately upon learning it; provided only that the word is true, i.e. sprung from things that are known.

## CHAPTER 13

### STILL FURTHER OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE KNOWLEDGE AND WORD OF OUR MIND, AND THE KNOWLEDGE AND WORD OF GOD

But is it so, that God the Father, from whom is born the Word that is God of God,—is it so, then, that God the Father, in respect to that wisdom which He is to Himself, has learned some things by His bodily senses, and others by Himself? Who could say this, who thinks of God, not as a rational animal, but as One above the rational soul? So far at least as He can be thought of, by those who place Him above all animals and all souls, although they see Him by conjecture through a glass and in an enigma, not yet face to face as He is. Is it that God the Father has learned those very things which He knows, not by the body, for He has none, but by Himself, from elsewhere from some one? or has stood in need of messengers or witnesses that He might know them? Certainly not; since His own perfection enables Him to know all things that He knows. No doubt He has messengers, viz. the angels; but not to announce to Him things that He knows not, for there is nothing He does not know. But their good lies in consulting the truth about their own works. And this it is which is meant by saying that they bring Him word of some things, not that He may learn of them, but they of Him by His word without bodily sound. They bring Him word, too, of that which He wills, being sent by Him to whomever He wills, and hearing all from Him by that word of His, i.e. finding in His truth what themselves are to do: what, to whom, and when, they are to bring word. For we too pray to Him, yet do not inform Him what our necessities are. “For your Father knoweth,” says His Word, “what things ye have need of, before you ask Him.” Nor did He become acquainted with them, so as to know them, at any definite time; but He knew beforehand, without any beginning, all things to come in time, and among them also both what we should ask of Him, and when; and to whom He would either listen or not listen, and on what subjects. And with respect to all His creatures, both spiritual and corporeal, He does not know them because they are, but they are because He knows them. For He was not ignorant of what He was about to create;

therefore He created because He knew; He did not know because He created. Nor did He know them when created in any other way than He knew them when still to be created, for nothing accrued to His wisdom from them; but that wisdom remained as it was, while they came into existence as it was fitting and when it was fitting. So, too, it is written in the book of Ecclesiasticus: "All things are known to Him ere ever they were created: so also after they were perfected." "So," he says, not otherwise; so were they known to Him, both ere ever they were created, and after they were perfected. This knowledge, therefore, is far unlike our knowledge. And the knowledge of God is itself also His wisdom, and His wisdom is itself His essence or substance. Because in the marvellous simplicity of that nature, it is not one thing to be wise and another to be, but to be wise is to be; as we have often said already also in the earlier books. But our knowledge is in most things capable both of being lost and of being recovered, because to us to be is not the same as to know or to be wise; since it is possible for us to be, even although we know not, neither are wise in that which we have learned from elsewhere. Therefore, as our knowledge is unlike that knowledge of God, so is our word also, which is born from our knowledge, unlike that Word of God which is born from the essence of the Father. And this is as if I should say, born from the Father's knowledge, from the Father's wisdom; or still more exactly, from the Father who is knowledge, from the Father who is wisdom.

#### CHAPTER 14

THE WORD OF GOD IS IN ALL THINGS EQUAL TO THE FATHER, FROM WHOM IT IS

23. The Word of God, then, the only-begotten Son of the Father, in all things like and equal to the Father, God of God, Light of Light, Wisdom of Wisdom, Essence of Essence, is altogether that which the Father is, yet is not the Father, because the one is Son, the other is Father. And hence He knows all that the Father knows; but to Him to know, as to be, is from the Father, for to know and to be is there one. And therefore, as to be is not to the Father from the Son, so neither is to know. Accordingly, as though uttering Himself, the Father begat the Word equal to Himself in all things; for He would not have uttered Himself wholly and perfectly, if there were in His Word anything more or less than in Himself. And here that is

recognized in the highest sense, “Yea, yea; nay, nay.” And therefore this Word is truly truth, since whatever is in that knowledge from which it is born is also in itself and whatever is not in that knowledge is not in the Word. And this Word can never have anything false, because it is unchangeable, as He is from whom it is. For “the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” Through power He cannot do this; nor is it infirmity, but strength, by which truth cannot be false. Therefore God the Father knows all things in Himself, knows all things in the Son; but in Himself as though Himself, in the Son as though His own Word which Word is spoken concerning all those things that are in Himself. Similarly the Son knows all things, viz. in Himself, as things which are born of those which the Father knows in Himself, and in the Father, as those of which they are born, which the Son Himself knows in Himself. The Father then, and the Son know mutually; but the one by begetting, the other by being born. And each of them sees simultaneously all things that are in their knowledge, in their wisdom, in their essence: not by parts or singly, as though by alternately looking from this side to that, and from that side to this, and again from this or that object to this or that object, so as not to be able to see some things without at the same time not seeing others; but, as I said, sees all things simultaneously, whereof there is not one that He does not always see.

24. And that word, then, of ours which has neither sound nor thought of sound, but is of that thing in seeing which we speak inwardly, and which therefore belongs to no tongue; and hence is in some sort like, in this enigma, to that Word of God which is also God; since this too is born of our knowledge, in such manner as that also is born of the knowledge of the Father: such a word, I say, of ours, which we find to be in some way like that Word, let us not be slow to consider how unlike also it is, as it may be in our power to utter it.

## CHAPTER 15

HOW GREAT IS THE UNLIKENESS BETWEEN OUR WORD AND THE DIVINE WORD. OUR WORD CANNOT BE OR BE CALLED ETERNAL



Is our word, then, born of our knowledge only? Do we not say many things also that we do not know? And say them not with doubt, but thinking them to be true; while if perchance they are true in respect to the things themselves of which we speak, they are yet not true in respect to our word, because a word is not true unless it is born of a thing that is known. In this sense, then, our word is false, not when we lie, but when we are deceived. And when we doubt, our word is not yet of the thing of which we doubt, but it is a word concerning the doubt itself. For although we do not know whether that is true of which we doubt, yet we do know that we doubt; and hence, when we say we doubt, we say a word that is true, for we say what we know. And what, too, of its being possible for us to lie? And when we do, certainly we both willingly and knowingly have a word that is false, wherein there is a word that is true, viz. that we lie, for this we know. And when we confess that we have lied, we speak that which is true; for we say what we know, for we know that we lied. But that Word which is God, and can do more than we, cannot do this. For it “can do nothing except what it sees the Father do;” and it “speaks not of itself,” but it has from the Father all that it speaks, since the Father speaks it in a special way; and the great might of that Word is that it cannot lie, because there cannot be there “yea and nay,” but “yea yea, nay nay.” Well, but that is not even to be called a word, which is not true. I willingly assent, if so it be. What, then, if our word is true and therefore is rightly called a word? Is it the case that, as we can speak of sight of sight, and knowledge of knowledge, so we can speak of essence of essence, as that Word of God is especially spoken of, and is especially to be spoken of? Why so? Because to us, to be is not the same as to know; since we know many things which in some sense live by memory, and so in some sense die by being forgotten: and so, when those things are no longer in our knowledge, yet we still are: and while our knowledge has slipped away and perished out of our mind, we are still alive.

25. In respect to those things also which are so known that they can never escape the memory, because they are present, and belong to the nature of the mind itself,—as, e.g., the knowing that we are alive (for this continues so long as the mind continues; and because the mind continues always, this also continues always);—I say, in respect to this and to any other like instances, in which we are the rather to contemplate the image of God, it is

difficult to make out in what way, although they are always known, yet because they are not always also thought of, an eternal word can be spoken respecting them, when our word is spoken in our thought. For it is eternal to the soul to live; it is eternal to know that it lives. Yet it is not eternal to it to be thinking of its own life, or to be thinking of its own knowledge of its own life; since, in entering upon this or that occupation, it will cease to think of this, although it does not cease from knowing it. And hence it comes to pass, that if there can be in the mind any knowledge that is eternal, while the thought of that knowledge cannot be eternal, and any inner and true word of ours is only said by our thought, then God alone can be understood to have a Word that is eternal, and co-eternal with Himself. Unless, perhaps, we are to say that the very possibility of thought—since that which is known is capable of being truly thought, even at the time when it is not being thought—constitutes a word as perpetual as the knowledge itself is perpetual. But how is that a word which is not yet formed in the vision of the thought? How will it be like the knowledge of which it is born, if it has not the form of that knowledge, and is only now called a word because it can have it? For it is much as if one were to say that a word is to be so called because it can be a word. But what is this that can be a word, and is therefore already held worthy of the name of a word? What, I say, is this thing that is formable, but not yet formed, except a something in our mind, which we toss to and fro by revolving it this way or that, while we think of first one thing and then another, according as they are found by or occur to us? And the true word then comes into being, when, as I said, that which we toss to and fro by revolving it arrives at that which we know, and is formed by that, in taking its entire likeness; so that in what manner each thing is known, in that manner also it is thought, i.e. is said in this manner in the heart, without articulate sound, without thought of articulate sound, such as no doubt belongs to some particular tongue. And hence if we even admit, in order not to dispute laboriously about a name, that this something of our mind, which can be formed from our knowledge, is to be already called a word, even before it is so formed, because it is, so to say, already formable, who would not see how great would be the unlikeness between it and that Word of God, which is so in the form of God, as not to have been formable before it was formed, or to have been

capable at any time of being formless, but is a simple form, and simply equal to Him from whom it is, and with whom it is wonderfully co-eternal?

## CHAPTER 16

OUR WORD IS NEVER TO BE EQUALLED TO THE DIVINE WORD, NOT EVEN WHEN WE SHALL BE LIKE GOD

Wherefore that Word of God is in such wise so called, as not to be called a thought of God, lest we believe that there is anything in God which can be revolved, so that it at one time receives and at another recovers a form, so as to be a word, and again can lose that form and be revolved in some sense formlessly. Certainly that excellent master of speech knew well the force of words, and had looked into the nature of thought, who said in his poem, “And revolves with himself the varying issues of war,” i.e. thinks of them. That Son of God, then, is not called the Thought of God, but the Word of God. For our own thought, attaining to what we know, and formed thereby, is our true word. And so the Word of God ought to be understood without any thought on the part of God, so that it be understood as the simple form itself, but containing nothing formable that can be also unformed. There are, indeed, passages of Holy Scripture that speak of God’s thoughts; but this is after the same mode of speech by which the forgetfulness of God is also there spoken of, whereas in strict propriety of language there is in Him certainly no forgetfulness.

26. Wherefore, since we have found now in this enigma so great an unlikeness to God and the Word of God, wherein yet there was found before some likeness, this, too, must be admitted, that even when we shall be like Him, when “we shall see Him as He is” (and certainly he who said this was aware beyond doubt of our present unlikeness), not even then shall we be equal to Him in nature. For that nature which is made is ever less than that which makes. And at that time our word will not indeed be false, because we shall neither lie nor be deceived. Perhaps, too, our thoughts will no longer revolve by passing and repassing from one thing to another, but we shall see all our knowledge at once, and at one glance. Still, when even this shall have come to pass, if indeed it shall come to pass, the creature which was formable will indeed have been formed, so that nothing will be wanting

of that form to which it ought to attain; yet nevertheless it will not be to be equalled to that simplicity wherein there is not anything formable, which has been formed or reformed, but only form; and which being neither formless nor formed, itself is eternal and unchangeable substance.

## CHAPTER 17

HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT IS CALLED LOVE, AND WHETHER HE ALONE IS SO CALLED.  
THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS IN THE SCRIPTURES PROPERLY CALLED BY THE NAME OF LOVE

27. We have sufficiently spoken of the Father and of the Son, so far as was possible for us to see through this glass and in this enigma. We must now treat of the Holy Spirit, so far as by God's gift it is permitted to see Him. And the Holy Spirit, according to the Holy Scriptures, is neither of the Father alone, nor of the Son alone, but of both; and so intimates to us a mutual love, wherewith the Father and the Son reciprocally love one another. But the language of the Word of God, in order to exercise us, has caused those things to be sought into with the greater zeal, which do not lie on the surface, but are to be scrutinized in hidden depths, and to be drawn out from thence. The Scriptures, accordingly, have not said, The Holy Spirit is Love. If they had said so, they would have done away with no small part of this inquiry. But they have said, "God is love;" so that it is uncertain and remains to be inquired whether God the Father is love, or God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost, or the Trinity itself which is God. For we are not going to say that God is called Love because love itself is a substance worthy of the name of God, but because it is a gift of God, as it is said to God, "Thou art my patience." For this is not said because our patience is God's substance, but in that He Himself gives it to us; as it is elsewhere read, "Since from Him is my patience." For the usage of words itself in Scripture sufficiently refutes this interpretation; for "Thou art my patience" is of the same kind as "Thou, Lord, art my hope," and "The Lord my God is my mercy," and many like texts. And it is not said, O Lord my love, or, Thou art my love, or, God my love; but it is said thus, "God is love," as it is said, "God is a Spirit." And he who does not discern this, must ask understanding from the Lord, not an explanation from us; for we cannot say anything more clearly.

28. “God,” then, “is love;” but the question is, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity itself: because the Trinity is not three Gods, but one God. But I have already argued above in this book, that the Trinity, which is God, is not so to be understood from those three things which have been set forth in the trinity of our mind, as that the Father should be the memory of all three, and the Son the understanding of all three, and the Holy Spirit the love of all three; as though the Father should neither understand nor love for Himself, but the Son should understand for Him, and the Holy Spirit love for Him, but He Himself should remember only both for Himself and for them; nor the Son remember nor love for Himself, but the Father should remember for Him, and the Holy Spirit love for Him, but He Himself understand only both for Himself and them; nor likewise that the Holy Spirit should neither remember nor understand for Himself, but the Father should remember for Him, and the Son understand for Him, while He Himself should love only both for Himself and for them; but rather in this way, that both all and each have all three each in His own nature. Nor that these things should differ in them, as in us memory is one thing, understanding another, love or charity another, but should be some one thing that is equivalent to all, as wisdom itself; and should be so contained in the nature of each, as that He who has it is that which He has, as being an unchangeable and simple substance. If all this, then, has been understood, and so far as is granted to us to see or conjecture in things so great, has been made patently true, I know not why both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit should not be called Love, and all together one love, just as both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit is called Wisdom, and all together not three, but one wisdom. For so also both the Father is God, and the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, and all three together one God.

29. And yet it is not to no purpose that in this Trinity the Son and none other is called the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit and none other the Gift of God, and God the Father alone is He from whom the Word is born, and from whom the Holy Spirit principally proceeds. And therefore I have added the word principally, because we find that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son also. But the Father gave Him this too, not as to one already existing, and not yet having it; but whatever He gave to the only-begotten

Word, He gave by begetting Him. Therefore He so begat Him as that the common Gift should proceed from Him also, and the Holy Spirit should be the Spirit of both. This distinction, then, of the inseparable Trinity is not to be merely accepted in passing, but to be carefully considered; for hence it was that the Word of God was specially called also the Wisdom of God, although both Father and Holy Spirit are wisdom. If, then, any one of the three is to be specially called Love, what more fitting than that it should be the Holy Spirit?—namely, that in that simple and highest nature, substance should not be one thing and love another, but that substance itself should be love, and love itself should be substance, whether in the Father, or in the Son, or in the Holy Spirit; and yet that the Holy Spirit should be specially called Love.

30. Just as sometimes all the utterances of the Old Testament together in the Holy Scriptures are signified by the name of the Law. For the apostle, in citing a text from the prophet Isaiah, where he says, “With divers tongues and with divers lips will I speak to this people,” yet prefaced it by, “It is written in the Law.” And the Lord Himself says, “It is written in their Law, They hated me without a cause,” whereas this is read in the Psalm. And sometimes that which was given by Moses is specially called the Law: as it is said, “The Law and the Prophets were until John;” and, “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Here, certainly, that is specially called the Law which was from Mount Sinai. And the Psalms, too, are signified under the name of the Prophets; and yet in another place the Saviour Himself says, “All things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalms concerning me.” Here, on the other side, He meant the name of Prophets to be taken as not including the Psalms. Therefore the Law with the Prophets and the Psalms taken together is called the Law universally, and the Law is also specially so called which was given by Moses. Likewise the Prophets are so called in common together with the Psalms, and they are also specially so called exclusive of the Psalms. And many other instances might be adduced to teach us, that many names of things are both put universally, and also specially applied to particular things, were it not that a long discourse is to be avoided in a plain case. I have said so much, lest any one should think that it was therefore

unsuitable for us to call the Holy Spirit Love, because both God the Father and God the Son can be called Love.

31. As, then, we call the only Word of God specially by the name of Wisdom, although universally both the Holy Spirit and the Father Himself is wisdom; so the Holy Spirit is specially called by the name of Love, although universally both the Father and the Son are love. But the Word of God, i.e. the only-begotten Son of God, is expressly called the Wisdom of God by the mouth of the apostle, where he says, “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” But where the Holy Spirit is called Love, is to be found by careful scrutiny of the language of John the apostle, who, after saying, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God,” has gone on to say, “And every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.” Here, manifestly, he has called that love God, which he said was of God; therefore God of God is love. But because both the Son is born of God the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father, it is rightly asked which of them we ought here to think is the rather called the love that is God. For the Father only is so God as not to be of God; and hence the love that is so God as to be of God, is either the Son or the Holy Spirit. But when, in what follows, the apostle had mentioned the love of God, not that by which we love Him, but that by which He “loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiator for our sins,” and thereupon had exhorted us also to love one another, and that so God would abide in us,—because, namely, he had called God Love; immediately, in his wish to speak yet more expressly on the subject, “Hereby,” he says, “know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.” Therefore the Holy Spirit, of whom He hath given us, makes us to abide in God, and Him in us; and this it is that love does. Therefore He is the God that is love. Lastly, a little after, when he had repeated the same thing, and had said “God is love,” he immediately subjoined, “And he who abideth in love, abideth in God, and God abideth in him;” whence he had said above, “Hereby we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.” He therefore is signified, where we read that God is love. Therefore God the Holy Spirit, who proceedeth from the Father, when He has been given to man, inflames him to the love of God and of his neighbor, and is Himself love. For man

has not whence to love God, unless from God; and therefore he says a little after, “Let us love Him, because He first loved us.” The Apostle Paul, too, says, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.”

## CHAPTER 18

### NO GIFT OF GOD IS MORE EXCELLENT THAN LOVE

32. There is no gift of God more excellent than this. It alone distinguishes the sons of the eternal kingdom and the sons of eternal perdition. Other gifts, too, are given by the Holy Spirit; but without love they profit nothing. Unless, therefore, the Holy Spirit is so far imparted to each, as to make him one who loves God and his neighbor, he is not removed from the left hand to the right. Nor is the Spirit specially called the Gift, unless on account of love. And he who has not this love, “though he speak with the tongues of men and angels, is sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; and though he have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and though he have all faith, so that he can remove mountains, he is nothing; and though he bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and though he give his body to be burned, it profiteth him nothing.” How great a good, then, is that without which goods so great bring no one to eternal life! But love or charity itself,—for they are two names for one thing,—if he have it that does not speak with tongues, nor has the gift of prophecy, nor knows all mysteries and all knowledge, nor gives all his goods to the poor, either because he has none to give or because some necessity hinders, nor delivers his body to be burned, if no trial of such a suffering overtakes him, brings that man to the kingdom, so that faith itself is only rendered profitable by love, since faith without love can indeed exist, but cannot profit. And therefore also the Apostle Paul says, “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love:” so distinguishing it from that faith by which even “the devils believe and tremble.” Love, therefore, which is of God and is God, is specially the Holy Spirit, by whom the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by which love the whole Trinity dwells in us. And therefore most rightly is the Holy Spirit, although He is God, called also the gift of God. And by that gift what else



can properly be understood except love, which brings to God, and without which any other gift of God whatsoever does not bring to God?

## CHAPTER 19

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS CALLED THE GIFT OF GOD IN THE SCRIPTURES. BY THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS MEANT THE GIFT WHICH IS THE HOLY SPIRIT. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SPECIALLY CALLED LOVE, ALTHOUGH NOT ONLY THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE TRINITY IS LOVE

33. Is this too to be proved, that the Holy Spirit is called in the sacred books the gift of God? If people look for this too, we have in the Gospel according to John the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who says, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink: he that believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." And the evangelist has gone on further to add, "And this He spake of the Spirit, which they should receive who believe in Him." And hence Paul the apostle also says, "And we have all been made to drink into one Spirit." The question then is, whether that water is called the gift of God which is the Holy Spirit. But as we find here that this water is the Holy Spirit, so we find elsewhere in the Gospel itself that this water is called the gift of God. For when the same Lord was talking with the woman of Samaria at the well, to whom He had said, "Give me to drink," and she had answered that the Jews "have no dealings" with the Samaritans, Jesus answered and said unto her, "If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is that says to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou this living water, etc.? Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whose shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a fountain of water springing up unto eternal life." Because this living water, then, as the evangelist has explained to us, is the Holy Spirit, without doubt the Spirit is the gift of God, of which the Lord says here, "If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." For that which is in the one passage, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living

water,” is in the other, “shall be in him a fountain of water springing up unto eternal life.”

34. Paul the apostle also says, “To each of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ;” and then, that he might show that by the gift of Christ he meant the Holy Spirit, he has gone on to add, “Wherefore He saith, He hath ascended up on high, He hath led captivity captive, and hath given gifts to men.” And every one knows that the Lord Jesus, when He had ascended into heaven after the resurrection from the dead, gave the Holy Spirit, with whom they who believed were filled, and spake with the tongues of all nations. And let no one object that he says gifts, not gift: for he quoted the text from the Psalm. And in the Psalm it is read thus, “Thou hast ascended up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts in men.” For so it stands in many mss., especially in the Greek mss., and so we have it translated from the Hebrew. The apostle therefore said gifts, as the prophet did, not gift. But whereas the prophet said, “Thou hast received gifts in men,” the apostle has preferred saying, “He gave gifts to men:” and this in order that the fullest sense may be gathered from both expressions, the one prophetic, the other apostolic; because both possess the authority of a divine utterance. For both are true, as well that He gave to men, as that He received in men. He gave to men, as the head to His own members: He Himself that gave, received in men, no doubt as in His own members; on account of which, namely, His own members, He cried from heaven, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” And of which, namely, His own members, He says, “Since ye have done it to one of the least of these that are mine, ye have done it unto me.” Christ Himself, therefore, both gave from heaven and received on earth. And further, both prophet and apostle have said gifts for this reason, because many gifts, which are proper to each, are divided in common to all the members of Christ, by the Gift, which is the Holy Spirit. For each severally has not all, but some have these and some have those; although all have the Gift itself by which that which is proper to each is divided to Him, i.e. the Holy Spirit. For elsewhere also, when he had mentioned many gifts, “All these,” he says, “worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to each severally as He will.” And this word is found also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where it is written, “God also bearing witness both with signs and

wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.” And so here, when he had said, “He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, He gave gifts to men,” he says further, “But that He ascended, what is it but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and doctors.” (This we see is the reason why gifts are spoken of; because, as he says elsewhere, “Are all apostles? are all prophets?” etc.) And here he has added, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ.” This is the house which, as the Psalm sings, is built up after the captivity; since the house of Christ, which house is called His Church, is built up of those who have been rescued from the devil, by whom they were held captive. But He Himself led this captivity captive, who conquered the devil. And that he might not draw with him into eternal punishment those who were to become the members of the Holy Head, He bound him first by the bonds of righteousness, and then by those of might. The devil himself, therefore, is called captivity, which He led captive who ascended up on high, and gave gifts to men, or received gifts in men.

35. And Peter the apostle, as we read in that canonical book, wherein the Acts of the Apostles are recorded,—when the hearts of the Jews were troubled as he spake of Christ, and they said, “Brethren, what shall we do? tell us,”—said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins: and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” And we read likewise in the same book, that Simon Magus desired to give money to the apostles, that he might receive power from them, whereby the Holy Spirit might be given by the laying on of his hands. And the same Peter said to him, “Thy money perish with thee: because thou hast thought to purchase for money the gift of God.” And in another place of the same book, when Peter was speaking to Cornelius, and to those who were with him, and was announcing and preaching Christ, the Scripture says, “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all them that heard the word; and they of the circumcision that believed, as many as came with Peter, were astonished, because that upon the Gentiles also the gift of the Holy Spirit

was poured out. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.” And when Peter afterwards was giving an account to the brethren that were at Jerusalem of this act of his, that he had baptized those who were not circumcised, because the Holy Spirit, to cut the knot of the question, had come upon them before they were baptized, and the brethren at Jerusalem were moved when they heard it, he says, after the rest of his words, “And when I began to speak to them, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us in the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, that John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If, therefore, He gave a like gift to them, as also to us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could hinder God from giving to them the Holy Spirit?” And there are many other testimonies of the Scriptures, which unanimously attest that the Holy Spirit is the gift of God, in so far as He is given to those who by Him love God. But it is too long a task to collect them all. And what is enough to satisfy those who are not satisfied with those we have alleged?

36. Certainly they must be warned, since they now see that the Holy Spirit is called the gift of God, that when they hear of “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” they should recognize therein that mode of speech which is found in the words, “In the spoiling of the body of the flesh.” For as the body of the flesh is nothing else but the flesh, so the gift of the Holy Spirit is nothing else but the Holy Spirit. He is then the gift of God, so far as He is given to those to whom He is given. But in Himself He is God, although He were given to no one, because He was God co-eternal with the Father and the Son before He was given to any one. Nor is He less than they, because they give, and He is given. For He is given as a gift of God in such way that He Himself also gives Himself as being God. For He cannot be said not to be in His own power, of whom it is said, “The Spirit bloweth where it listeth;” and the apostle says, as I have already mentioned above, “All these things worketh that selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.” We have not here the creating of Him that is given, and the rule of them that give, but the concord of the given and the givers.

37. Wherefore, if Holy Scripture proclaims that God is love, and that love is of God, and works this in us that we abide in God and He in us, and that

hereby we know this, because He has given us of His Spirit, then the Spirit Himself is God, who is love. Next, if there be among the gifts of God none greater than love, and there is no greater gift of God than the Holy Spirit, what follows more naturally than that He is Himself love, who is called both God and of God? And if the love by which the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father, ineffably demonstrates the communion of both, what is more suitable than that He should be specially called love, who is the Spirit common to both? For this is the sounder thing both to believe and to understand, that the Holy Spirit is not alone love in that Trinity, yet is not specially called love to no purpose, for the reasons we have alleged; just as He is not alone in that Trinity either a Spirit or holy, since both the Father is a Spirit, and the Son is a Spirit; and both the Father is holy, and the Son is holy,—as piety doubts not. And yet it is not to no purpose that He is specially called the Holy Spirit; for because He is common to both, He is specially called that which both are in common. Otherwise, if in that Trinity the Holy Spirit alone is love, then doubtless the Son too turns out to be the Son, not of the Father only, but also of the Holy Spirit. For He is both said and read in countless places to be so,—the only-begotten Son of God the Father; as that what the apostle says of God the Father is true too: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His own love.” He did not say, “of His own Son.” If He had so said, He would have said it most truly, just as He did say it most truly, because He has often said it; but He says, “the Son of His own love.” Therefore He is the Son also of the Holy Spirit, if there is in that Trinity no love in God except the Holy Spirit. And if this is most absurd, it remains that the Holy Spirit is not alone therein love, but is specially so called for the reasons I have sufficiently set forth; and that the words, “Son of His own love,” mean nothing else than His own beloved Son,—the Son, in short, of His own substance. For the love in the Father, which is in His ineffably simple nature, is nothing else than His very nature and substance itself,—as we have already often said, and are not ashamed of often repeating. And hence the “Son of His love,” is none other than He who is born of His substance.

## CHAPTER 20

AGAINST EUNOMIUS, SAYING THAT THE SON OF GOD IS THE SON, NOT OF HIS NATURE, BUT OF HIS WILL. EPILOGUE TO WHAT HAS BEEN SAID ALREADY

38. Wherefore the logic of Eunomius, from whom the Eunomian heretics sprang, is ridiculous. For when he could not understand, and would not believe, that the only-begotten Word of God, by which all things were made is the Son of God by nature,—i.e. born of the substance of the Father,—he alleged that He was not the Son of His own nature or substance or essence, but the Son of the will of God; so as to mean to assert that the will by which he begot the Son was something accidental [and optional] to God,—to wit, in that way that we ourselves sometimes will something which before we did not will, as though it was not for these very things that our nature is perceived to be changeable,—a thing which far be it from us to believe of God. For it is written, “Many are the thoughts in the heart of man, but the counsel of the Lord abideth for ever,” for no other reason except that we may understand or believe that as God is eternal, so is His counsel for eternity, and therefore unchangeable, as He himself is. And what is said of thoughts can most truly be said also of the will: there are many wills in the heart of man, but the will of the Lord abideth for ever. Some, again, to escape saying that the only-begotten Word is the Son of the counsel or will of God, have affirmed the same Word to be the counsel or will itself of the Father. But it is better in my judgment to say counsel of counsel, and will of will, as substance of substance, wisdom of wisdom, that we may not be led into that absurdity, which we have refuted already, and say that the Son makes the Father wise or willing, if the Father has not in His own substance either counsel or will. It was certainly a sharp answer that somebody gave to the heretic, who most subtly asked him whether God begat the Son willingly or unwillingly, in order that if he said unwillingly, it would follow most absurdly that God was miserable; but if willingly, he would forthwith infer, as though by an invincible reason, that at which he was aiming, viz. that He was the Son, not of His nature, but of His will. But that other, with great wakefulness, demanded of him in turn, whether God the Father was God willingly or unwillingly; in order that if he answered unwillingly, that misery would follow, which to believe of God is sheer madness; and if he said willingly, it would be replied to him, Then He is God too by His own

will, not by His nature. What remained, then, except that he should hold his peace, and discern that he was himself bound by his own question in an insoluble bond? But if any person in the Trinity is also to be specially called the will of God, this name, like love, is better suited to the Holy Spirit; for what else is love, except will?

39. I see that my argument in this book respecting the Holy Spirit, according to the Holy Scripture, is quite enough for faithful men who know already that the Holy Spirit is God, and not of another substance, nor less than the Father and the Son,—as we have shown to be true in the former books, according to the same Scriptures. We have reasoned also from the creature which God made, and, as far as we could, have warned those who demand a reason on such subjects to behold and understand His invisible things, so far as they could, by those things which are made and especially by the rational or intellectual creature which is made after the image of God; through which glass, so to say, they might discern as far as they could, if they could, the Trinity which is God, in our own memory, understanding, will. Which three things, if any one intelligently regards as by nature divinely appointed in his own mind, and remembers by memory, contemplates by understanding, embraces by love, how great a thing that is in the mind, whereby even the eternal and unchangeable nature can be recollected, beheld, desired, doubtless that man finds an image of that highest Trinity. And he ought to refer the whole of his life to the remembering, seeing, loving that highest Trinity, in order that he may recollect, contemplate, be delighted by it. But I have warned him, so far as seemed sufficient, that he must not so compare this image thus wrought by that Trinity, and by his own fault changed for the worse, to that same Trinity as to think it in all points like to it, but rather that he should discern in that likeness, of whatever sort it be, a great unlikeness also.

## CHAPTER 21

OF THE LIKENESS OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON ALLEGED TO BE IN OUR MEMORY AND UNDERSTANDING. OF THE LIKENESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR WILL OR LOVE

40. I have undoubtedly taken pains so far as I could, not indeed so that the thing might be seen face to face, but that it might be seen by this likeness in

an enigma, in how small a degree soever, by conjecture, in our memory and understanding, to intimate God the Father and God the Son: i.e. God the begetter, who has in some way spoken by His own co-eternal Word all things that He has in His substance; and God His Word Himself, who Himself has nothing either more or less in substance than is in Him, who, not lyingly but truly, hath begotten the Word; and I have assigned to memory everything that we know, even if we were not thinking of it, but to understanding the formation after a certain special mode of the thought. For we are usually said to understand what, by thinking of it, we have found to be true; and this it is again that we leave in the memory. But that is a still more hidden depth of our memory, wherein we found this also first when we thought of it, and wherein an inner word is begotten such as belongs to no tongue,—as it were, knowledge of knowledge, vision of vision, and understanding which appears in [reflective] thought; of understanding which had indeed existed before in the memory, but was latent there, although, unless the thought itself had also some sort of memory of its own, it would not return to those things which it had left in the memory while it turned to think of other things.

41. But I have shown nothing in this enigma respecting the Holy Spirit such as might appear to be like Him, except our own will, or love, or affection, which is a stronger will, since our will which we have naturally is variously affected, according as various objects are adjacent or occur to it, by which we are attracted or offended. What, then, is this? Are we to say that our will, when it is right, knows not what to desire, what to avoid? Further, if it knows, doubtless then it has a kind of knowledge of its own, such as cannot be without memory and understanding. Or are we to listen to any one who should say that love knows not what it does, which does not do wrongly? As, then, there are both understanding and love in that primary memory wherein we find provided and stored up that to which we can come in thought, because we find also those two things there, when we find by thinking that we both understand and love anything; which things were there too when we were not thinking of them: and as there are memory and love in that understanding, which is formed by thought, which true word we say inwardly without the tongue of any nation when we say what we know; for the gaze of our thought does not return to anything except by



remembering it, and does not care to return unless by loving it: so love, which combines the vision brought about in the memory, and the vision of the thought formed thereby, as if parent and offspring, would not know what to love rightly unless it had a knowledge of what it desired, which it cannot have without memory and understanding.

## CHAPTER 22

HOW GREAT THE UNLIKENESS IS BETWEEN THE IMAGE OF THE TRINITY WHICH WE HAVE FOUND IN OURSELVES, AND THE TRINITY ITSELF

42. But since these are in one person, as man is, some one may say to us, These three things, memory, understanding, and love, are mine, not their own; neither do they do that which they do for themselves, but for me, or rather I do it by them. For it is I who remember by memory, and understand by understanding, and love by love: and when I direct the mind's eye to my memory, and so say in my heart the thing I know, and a true word is begotten of my knowledge, both are mine, both the knowledge certainly and the word. For it is I who know, and it is I who say in my heart the thing I know. And when I come to find in my memory by thinking that I understand and love anything, which understanding and love were there also before I thought thereon, it is my own understanding and my own love that I find in my own memory, whereby it is I that understand, and I that love, not those things themselves. Likewise, when my thought is mindful, and wills to return to those things which it had left in the memory, and to understand and behold them, and say them inwardly, it is my own memory that is mindful, and it is my own, not its will, wherewith it wills. When my very love itself, too, remembers and understands what it ought to desire and what to avoid, it remembers by my, not by its own memory; and understands that which it intelligently loves by my, not by its own, understanding. In brief, by all these three things, it is I that remember, I that understand, I that love, who am neither memory, nor understanding, nor love, but who have them. These things, then, can be said by a single person, which has these three, but is not these three. But in the simplicity of that Highest Nature, which is God, although there is one God, there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

## CHAPTER 23

AUGUSTIN DWELLS STILL FURTHER ON THE DISPARITY BETWEEN THE TRINITY WHICH IS IN MAN, AND THE TRINITY WHICH IS GOD. THE TRINITY IS NOW SEEN THROUGH A GLASS BY THE HELP OF FAITH, THAT IT MAY HEREAFTER BE MORE CLEARLY SEEN IN THE PROMISED SIGHT FACE TO FACE

43. A thing itself, then, which is a trinity is different from the image of a trinity in some other thing; by reason of which image, at the same time that also in which these three things are is called an image; just as both the panel, and the picture painted on it, are at the same time called an image; but by reason of the picture painted on it, the panel also is called by the name of image. But in that Highest Trinity, which is incomparably above all things, there is so great an indivisibility, that whereas a trinity of men cannot be called one man, in that, there both is said to be and is one God, nor is that Trinity in one God, but it is one God. Nor, again, as that image in the case of man has these three things but is one person, so is it with the Trinity; but therein are three persons, the Father of the Son, and the Son of the Father, and the Spirit of both Father and Son. For although the memory in the case of man, and especially that memory which beasts have not—viz. the memory by which things intelligible are so contained as that they have not entered that memory through the bodily senses—has in this image of the Trinity, in proportion to its own small measure, a likeness of the Father, incomparably unequal, yet of some sort, whatever it be: and likewise the understanding in the case of man, which by the purpose of the thought is formed thereby, when that which is known is said, and there is a word of the heart belonging to no tongue, has in its own great disparity some likeness of the Son; and love in the case of man proceeding from knowledge, and combining memory and understanding, as though common to parent and offspring, whereby it is understood to be neither parent nor offspring, has in that image, some, however exceedingly unequal, likeness of the Holy Spirit: it is nevertheless not the case, that, as in that image of the Trinity, these three are not one man, but belong to one man, so in the Highest Trinity itself, of which this is an image, these three belong to one God, but they are one God, and these are three persons, not one. A thing certainly wonderfully ineffable, or ineffably wonderful, that while this image of the Trinity is one person, but the Highest Trinity itself is three persons, yet that

Trinity of three persons is more indivisible than this of one. For that [Trinity], in the nature of the Divinity, or perhaps better Deity, is that which it is, and is mutually and always unchangeably equal: and there was no time when it was not, or when it was otherwise; and there will be no time when it will not be, or when it will be otherwise. But these three that are in the inadequate image, although they are not separate in place, for they are not bodies, yet are now in this life mutually separate in magnitude. For that there are therein no several bulks, does not hinder our seeing that memory is greater than understanding in one man, but the contrary in another; and that in yet another these two are overpassed by the greatness of love; and this whether the two themselves are or are not equal to one another. And so each two by each one, and each one by each two, and each one by each one: the less are surpassed by the greater. And when they have been healed of all infirmity, and are mutually equal, not even then will that thing which by grace will not be changed, be made equal to that which by nature cannot change, because the creature cannot be equalled to the Creator, and when it shall be healed from all infirmity, will be changed.

44. But when the sight shall have come which is promised anew to us face to face, we shall see this not only incorporeal but also absolutely indivisible and truly unchangeable Trinity far more clearly and certainly than we now see its image which we ourselves are: and yet they who see through this glass and in this enigma, as it is permitted in this life to see, are not those who behold in their own mind the things which we have set in order and pressed upon them; but those who see this as if an image, so as to be able to refer what they see, in some way be it what it may, to Him whose image it is, and to see that also by conjecturing, which they see through the image by beholding, since they cannot yet see face to face. For the apostle does not say, We see now a glass, but, We see now through a glass.

## CHAPTER 24

### THE INFIRMITY OF THE HUMAN MIND

They, then, who see their own mind, in whatever way that is possible, and in it that Trinity of which I have treated as I could in many ways, and yet do not believe or understand it to be an image of God, see indeed a glass, but

do not so far see through the glass Him who is now to be seen through the glass, that they do not even know the glass itself which they see to be a glass, i.e. an image. And if they knew this, perhaps they would feel that He too whose glass this is, should by it be sought, and somehow provisionally be seen, an unfeigned faith purging their hearts, that He who is now seen through a glass may be able to be seen face to face. And if they despise this faith that purifies the heart, what do they accomplish by understanding the most subtle disputes concerning the nature of the human mind, unless that they be condemned also by the witness of their own understanding? And they would certainly not so fail in understanding, and hardly arrive at anything certain, were they not involved in penal darkness, and burdened with the corruptible body that presses down the soul. And for what demerit save that of sin is this evil inflicted on them? Wherefore, being warned by the magnitude of so great an evil, they ought to follow the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world.

## CHAPTER 25

THE QUESTION WHY THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT BEGOTTEN, AND HOW HE PROCEEDS FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON, WILL ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD WHEN WE ARE IN BLISS

For if any belong to Him, although far duller in intellect than those, yet when they are freed from the body at the end of this life, the envious powers have no right to hold them. For that Lamb that was slain by them without any debt of sin has conquered them; but not by the might of power before He had done so by the righteousness of blood. And free accordingly from the power of the devil, they are borne up by holy angels, being set free from all evils by the mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Since by the harmonious testimony of the Divine Scriptures, both Old and New, both those by which Christ was foretold, and those by which He was announced, there is no other name under heaven whereby men must be saved. And when purged from all contagion of corruption, they are placed in peaceful abodes until they take their bodies again, their own, but now incorruptible, to adorn, not to burden them. For this is the will of the best and most wise Creator, that the spirit of a man, when piously subject to

God, should have a body happily subject, and that this happiness should last for ever.

45. There we shall see the truth without any difficulty, and shall enjoy it to the full, most clear and most certain. Nor shall we be inquiring into anything by a mind that reasons, but shall discern by a mind that contemplates, why the Holy Spirit is not a Son, although He proceeds from the Father. In that light there will be no place for inquiry: but here, by experience itself it has appeared to me so difficult,—as beyond doubt it will likewise appear to them also who shall carefully and intelligently read what I have written,—that although in the second book I promised that I would speak thereof in another place, yet as often as I have desired to illustrate it by the creaturely image of it which we ourselves are, so often, let my meaning be of what sort it might, did adequate utterance entirely fail me; nay, even in my very meaning I felt that I had attained to endeavor rather than accomplishment. I had indeed found in one person, such as is a man, an image of that Highest Trinity, and had desired, especially in the ninth book, to illustrate and render more intelligible the relation of the Three Persons by that which is subject to time and change. But three things belonging to one person cannot suit those Three Persons, as man's purpose demands; and this we have demonstrated in this fifteenth book.

## CHAPTER 26

THE HOLY SPIRIT TWICE GIVEN BY CHRIST. THE PROCESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM THE FATHER AND FROM THE SON IS APART FROM TIME, NOR CAN HE BE CALLED THE SON OF BOTH

Further, in that Highest Trinity which is God, there are no intervals of time, by which it could be shown, or at least inquired, whether the Son was born of the Father first and then afterwards the Holy Spirit proceeded from both; since Holy Scripture calls Him the Spirit of both. For it is He of whom the apostle says, "But because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts:" and it is He of whom the same Son says, "For it is not ye who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaketh in you." And it is proved by many other testimonies of the Divine Word, that the Spirit, who is specially called in the Trinity the Holy Spirit, is of the Father and of the Son: of whom likewise the Son Himself says, "Whom I will send unto

you from the Father;” and in another place, “Whom the Father will send in my name.” And we are so taught that He proceeds from both, because the Son Himself says, He proceeds from the Father. And when He had risen from the dead, and had appeared to His disciples, “He breathed upon them, and said, Receive the Holy Ghost,” so as to show that He proceeded also from Himself. And Itself is that very “power that went out from Him,” as we read in the Gospel, “and healed them all.”

46. But the reason why, after His resurrection, He both gave the Holy Spirit, first on earth, and afterwards sent Him from heaven, is in my judgment this: that “love is shed abroad in our hearts,” by that Gift itself, whereby we love God and our neighbors, according to those two commandments, “on which hang all the law and the prophets.” And Jesus Christ, in order to signify this, gave to them the Holy Spirit, once upon earth, on account of the love of our neighbor, and a second time from heaven, on account of the love of God. And if some other reason may perhaps be given for this double gift of the Holy Spirit, at any rate we ought not to doubt that the same Holy Spirit was given when Jesus breathed upon them, of whom He by and by says, “Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” where this Trinity is especially commended to us. It is therefore He who was also given from heaven on the day of Pentecost, i.e. ten days after the Lord ascended into heaven. How, therefore, is He not God, who gives the Holy Spirit? Nay, how great a God is He who gives God! For no one of His disciples gave the Holy Spirit, since they prayed that He might come upon those upon whom they laid their hands: they did not give Him themselves. And the Church preserves this custom even now in the case of her rulers. Lastly, Simon Magus also, when he offered the apostles money, does not say, “Give me also this power, that I may give” the Holy Spirit; but, “that on whomsoever I may lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit.” Because neither had the Scriptures said before, And Simon, seeing that the apostles gave the Holy Spirit; but it had said, “And Simon, seeing that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the apostles’ hands.” Therefore also the Lord Jesus Christ Himself not only gave the Holy Spirit as God, but also received it as man, and therefore He is said to be full of grace, and of the Holy Spirit. And in the Acts of the Apostles it is more plainly written of Him, “Because God anointed Him

with the Holy Spirit.” Certainly not with visible oil but with the gift of grace which is signified by the visible ointment wherewith the Church anoints the baptized. And Christ was certainly not then anointed with the Holy Spirit, when He, as a dove, descended upon Him at His baptism. For at that time He deigned to prefigure His body, i.e. His Church, in which especially the baptized receive the Holy Spirit. But He is to be understood to have been then anointed with that mystical and invisible unction, when the Word of God was made flesh, i.e. when human nature, without any precedent merits of good works, was joined to God the Word in the womb of the Virgin, so that with it it became one person. Therefore it is that we confess Him to have been born of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary. For it is most absurd to believe Him to have received the Holy Spirit when He was near thirty years old: for at that age He was baptized by John; but that He came to baptism as without any sin at all, so not without the Holy Spirit. For if it was written of His servant and forerunner John himself, “He shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb,” because, although generated by his father, yet he received the Holy Spirit when formed in the womb; what must be understood and believed of the man Christ, of whose flesh the very conception was not carnal, but spiritual? Both natures, too, as well the human as the divine, are shown in that also that is written of Him, that He received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, and shed forth the Holy Spirit: seeing that He received as man, and shed forth as God. And we indeed can receive that gift according to our small measure, but assuredly we cannot shed it forth upon others; but, that this may be done, we invoke over them God, by whom this is accomplished.

47. Are we therefore able to ask whether the Holy Spirit had already proceeded from the Father when the Son was born, or had not yet proceeded; and when He was born, proceeded from both, wherein there is no such thing as distinct times: just as we have been able to ask, in a case where we do find times, that the will proceeds from the human mind first, in order that that may be sought which, when found, may be called offspring; which offspring being already brought forth or born, that will is made perfect, resting in this end, so that what had been its desire when seeking, is its love when enjoying; which love now proceeds from both, i.e.

from the mind that begets, and from the notion that is begotten, as if from parent and offspring? These things it is absolutely impossible to ask in this case, where nothing is begun in time, so as to be perfected in a time following. Wherefore let him who can understand the generation of the Son from the Father without time, understand also the procession of the Holy Spirit from both without time. And let him who can understand, in that which the Son says, “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself,” not that the Father gave life to the Son already existing without life, but that He so begat Him apart from time, that the life which the Father gave to the Son by begetting Him is co-eternal with the life of the Father who gave it: let him, I say, understand, that as the Father has in Himself that the Holy Spirit should proceed from Him, so has He given to the Son that the same Holy Spirit should proceed from Him, and be both apart from time: and that the Holy Spirit is so said to proceed from the Father as that it be understood that His proceeding also from the Son, is a property derived by the Son from the Father. For if the Son has of the Father whatever He has, then certainly He has of the Father, that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from Him. But let no one think of any times therein which imply a sooner and a later; because these things are not there at all. How, then, would it not be most absurd to call Him the Son of both: when, just as generation from the Father, without any changeableness of nature, gives to the Son essence, without beginning of time; so procession from both, without any changeableness of nature, gives to the Holy Spirit essence without beginning of time? For while we do not say that the Holy Spirit is begotten, yet we do not therefore dare to say that He is unbegotten, lest any one suspect in this word either two Fathers in that Trinity, or two who are not from another. For the Father alone is not from another, and therefore He alone is called unbegotten, not indeed in the Scriptures, but in the usage of disputants, who employ such language as they can on so great a subject. And the Son is born of the Father; and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father principally, the Father giving the procession without any interval of time, yet in common from both [Father and Son]. But He would be called the Son of the Father and of the Son, if—a thing abhorrent to the feeling of all sound minds—both had begotten Him. Therefore the Spirit of both is not begotten of both, but proceeds from both.



## CHAPTER 27

WHAT IT IS THAT SUFFICES HERE TO SOLVE THE QUESTION WHY THE SPIRIT IS NOT SAID TO BE BEGOTTEN, AND WHY THE FATHER ALONE IS UNBEGOTTEN. WHAT THEY OUGHT TO DO WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND THESE THINGS

48. But because it is most difficult to distinguish generation from procession in that co-eternal, and equal, and incorporeal, and ineffably unchangeable and indivisible Trinity, let it suffice meanwhile to put before those who are not able to be drawn on further, what we said upon this subject in a sermon to be delivered in the ears of Christian people, and after saying wrote it down. For when, among other things, I had taught them by testimonies of the Holy Scriptures that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both, I continue: “If, then, the Holy Spirit proceeds both from the Father and from the Son, why did the Son say, He proceedeth from the Father?” Why, think you, except as He is wont to refer to Him, that also which is His own, from whom also He Himself is? Whence also is that which He saith, My doctrine is not mine own, but His that sent me?’ If, therefore, it is His doctrine that is here understood, which yet He said was not His own, but His that sent Him, how much more is it there to be understood that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from Himself, where He so says, He proceedeth from the Father, as not to say, He proceedeth not from me? From Him, certainly, from whom the Son had his Divine nature, for He is God of God, He has also, that from Him too proceeds the Holy Spirit; and hence the Holy Spirit has from the Father Himself, that He should proceed from the Son also, as He proceeds from the Father. Here, too, in some way may this also be understood, so far as it can be understood by such as we are, why the Holy Spirit is not said to be born, but rather to proceed; since if He, too, was called a Son, He would certainly be called the Son of both, which is most absurd, since no one is son of two, save of father and mother. But far be it from us to surmise any such thing as this between God the Father and God the Son. Because not even the son of men proceeds at the same time from both father and mother; but when he proceeds from the father into the mother, he does not at that time proceed from the mother; and when he proceeds from the mother into this present light, he does not at that time proceed from the father. But the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Father into the Son, and from the Son proceed to sanctify the creature, but proceeds at once from both; although

the Father has given this to the Son, that He should proceed, as from Himself, so also from Him. For we cannot say that the Holy Spirit is not life, while the Father is life, and the Son is life: and hence as the Father, while He has life in Himself, has given also to the Son to have life in Himself; so has He given also to Him that life should proceed from Him, as it also proceeds from Himself.” I have transferred this from that sermon into this book, but I was speaking to believers, not to unbelievers.

49. But if they are not competent to gaze upon this image, and to see how true these things are which are in their mind, and yet which are not so three as to be three persons, but all three belong to a man who is one person; why do they not believe what they find in the sacred books respecting that highest Trinity which is God, rather than insist on the clearest reason being rendered them, which cannot be comprehended by the human mind, dull and infirm as it is? And to be sure, when they have steadfastly believed the Holy Scriptures as most true witnesses, let them strive, by praying and seeking and living well, that they may understand, i.e. that so far as it can be seen, that may be seen by the mind which is held fast by faith. Who would forbid this? Nay, who would not rather exhort them to it? But if they think they ought to deny that these things are, because they, with their blind minds, cannot discern them, they, too, who are blind from their birth, ought to deny that there is a sun. The light then shineth in darkness; but if the darkness comprehend it not, let them first be illuminated by the gift of God, that they may be believers, and let them begin to be light in comparison with the unbelievers; and when this foundation is first laid, let them be built up to see what they believe, that at some time they may be able to see. For some things are so believed, that they cannot be seen at all. For Christ is not to be seen a second time on the cross; but unless this be believed which has been so done and seen, that it is not now to be hoped for as about to be and to be seen, there is no coming to Christ, such as without end He is to be seen. But as far as relates to the discerning in some way by the understanding that highest, ineffable, incorporeal, and unchangeable nature the sight of the human mind can nowhere better exercise itself, so only that the rule of faith govern it, than in that which man himself has in his own nature better than the other animals, better also than the other parts of his own soul, which is the mind itself, to which has been assigned a certain

sight of things invisible, and to which, as though honorably presiding in a higher and inner place, the bodily senses also bring word of all things, that they may be judged, and than which there is no higher, to which it is to be subject, and by which it is to be governed, except God.

50. But among these many things which I have now said, and of which there is nothing that I dare to profess myself to have said worthy of the ineffableness of that highest Trinity, but rather to confess that the wonderful knowledge of Him is too great for me, and that I cannot attain to it: O thou, my soul, where dost thou feel thyself to be? where dost thou lie? where dost thou stand? until all thy infirmities be healed by Him who has forgiven all thy iniquities. Thou perceivest thyself assuredly to be in that inn whither that Samaritan brought him whom he found with many wounds inflicted by thieves, half-dead. And yet thou hast seen many things that are true, not by those eyes by which colored objects are seen, but by those for which he prayed who said, "Let mine eyes behold the things that are equal." Certainly, then, thou hast seen many things that are true, and hast distinguished them from that light by the light of which thou hast seen them. Lift up thine eyes to the light itself, and fix them upon it if thou canst. For so thou wilt see how the birth of the Word of God differs from the procession of the Gift of God, on account of which the only-begotten Son did not say that the Holy Spirit is begotten of the Father, otherwise He would be His brother, but that he proceeds from Him. Whence, since the Spirit of both is a kind of consubstantial communion of Father and Son, He is not called, far be it from us to say so, the Son of both. But thou canst not fix thy sight there, so as to discern this lucidly and clearly; I know thou canst not. I say the truth, I say to myself, I know what I cannot do; yet that light itself shows to thee these three things in thyself, wherein thou mayest recognize an image of the highest Trinity itself, which thou canst not yet contemplate with steady eye. Itself shows to thee that there is in thee a true word, when it is born of thy knowledge, i.e. when we say what we know: although we neither utter nor think of any articulate word that is significant in any tongue of any nation, but our thought is formed by that which we know; and there is in the mind's eye of the thinker an image resembling that thought which the memory contained, will or love as a third combining these two as parent and offspring. And he who can, sees and discerns that

this will proceeds indeed from thought (for no one wills that of which he is absolutely ignorant what or of what sort it is), yet is not an image of the thought: and so that there is insinuated in this intelligible thing a sort of difference between birth and procession, since to behold by thought is not the same as to desire, or even to enjoy will. Thou, too, hast been able [to discern this], although thou hast not been, neither art, able to unfold with adequate speech what, amidst the clouds of bodily likenesses, which cease not to flit up and down before human thoughts, thou hast scarcely seen. But that light which is not thyself shows thee this too, that these incorporeal likenesses of bodies are different from the truth, which, by rejecting them, we contemplate with the understanding. These, and other things similarly certain, that light hath shown to thine inner eyes. What reason, then, is there why thou canst not see that light itself with steady eye, except certainly infirmity? And what has produced this in thee, except iniquity? Who, then, is it that healeth all thine infirmities, unless it be He that forgiveth all thine iniquities? And therefore I will now at length finish this book by a prayer better than by an argument.

## CHAPTER 28

### THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK WITH A PRAYER, AND AN APOLOGY FOR MULTITUDE OF WORDS

51. O Lord our God, we believe in Thee, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For the Truth would not say, Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, unless Thou wast a Trinity. Nor wouldest thou, O Lord God, bid us to be baptized in the name of Him who is not the Lord God. Nor would the divine voice have said, Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God, unless Thou wert so a Trinity as to be one Lord God. And if Thou, O God, wert Thyself the Father, and wert Thyself the Son, Thy Word Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit your gift, we should not read in the book of truth, “God sent His Son;” nor wouldest Thou, O Only-begotten, say of the Holy Spirit, “Whom the Father will send in my name;” and, “Whom I will send to you from the Father.” Directing my purpose by this rule of faith, so far as I have been able, so far as Thou hast made me to be able, I have sought Thee, and have desired to see with my understanding what I believed; and I have argued and labored much. O

Lord my God, my one hope, hearken to me, lest through weariness I be unwilling to seek Thee, “but that I may always ardently seek Thy face.” Do Thou give strength to seek, who hast made me find Thee, and hast given the hope of finding Thee more and more. My strength and my infirmity are in Thy sight: preserve the one, and heal the other. My knowledge and my ignorance are in Thy sight; where Thou hast opened to me, receive me as I enter; where Thou hast closed, open to me as I knock. May I remember Thee, understand Thee, love Thee. Increase these things in me, until Thou renewest me wholly. I know it is written, “In the multitude of speech, thou shalt not escape sin.” But O that I might speak only in preaching Thy word, and in praising Thee! Not only should I so flee from sin, but I should earn good desert, however much I so spake. For a man blessed of Thee would not enjoin a sin upon his own true son in the faith, to whom he wrote, “Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season.” Are we to say that he has not spoken much, who was not silent about Thy word, O Lord, not only in season, but out of season? But therefore it was not much, because it was only what was necessary. Set me free, O God, from that multitude of speech which I suffer inwardly in my soul, wretched as it is in Thy sight, and flying for refuge to Thy mercy; for I am not silent in thoughts, even when silent in words. And if, indeed, I thought of nothing save what pleased Thee, certainly I would not ask Thee to set me free from such multitude of speech. But many are my thoughts, such as Thou knowest, “thoughts of man, since they are vain.” Grant to me not to consent to them; and if ever they delight me, nevertheless to condemn them, and not to dwell in them, as though I slumbered. Nor let them so prevail in me, as that anything in my acts should proceed from them; but at least let my opinions, let my conscience, be safe from them, under Thy protection. When the wise man spake of Thee in his book, which is now called by the special name of Ecclesiasticus, “We speak,” he said, “much, and yet come short; and in sum of words, He is all.” When, therefore, we shall have come to Thee, these very many things that we speak, and yet come short, will cease; and Thou, as One, wilt remain “all in all.” And we shall say one thing without end, in praising Thee in One, ourselves also made one in Thee. O Lord the one God, God the Trinity, whatever I have said in these books that is of Thine, may they acknowledge who are Thine; if anything of my own, may it be pardoned both by Thee and by those who are Thine. Amen.

# ON TWO SOULS, AGAINST THE MANICHAEANS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY AETERNA PRESS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

(DE DUABUS ANIMABUS, CONTRA MANICHAEOS)

A.D. 391.

ST. AUGUSTIN.

TRANSLATED BY

ALBERT H. NEWMAN, D.D., LL.D.,

PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION, IN TORONTO  
BAPTIST (THEOLOGICAL) COLLEGE, TORONTO, CANADA.

# CONTENTS

## ON TWO SOULS, AGAINST THE MANICHAEANS

Concerning Two Souls, Against the Manichaeans

### Chapter 1

By What Course of Reasoning the Error of the Manichaeans Concerning Two Souls, One of Which is Not from God, is Refuted. Every Soul, Inasmuch as It is a Certain Life, Can Have Its Existence Only from God the Source of Life

### Chapter 2

If the Light that is Perceived by Sense Has God for Its Author, as the Manichaeans Acknowledge, Much More The Soul Which is Perceived by Intellect Alone

### Chapter 3

How It is Proved that Every Body Also is from God. That the Soul Which is Called Evil by the Manichaeans is Better Than Light

### Chapter 4

Even the Soul of a Fly is More Excellent Than the Light

### Chapter 5

How Vicious Souls, However Worthy of Condemnation They May Be, Excel the Light Which is Praiseworthy in Its Kind

### Chapter 6

Whether Even Vices Themselves as Objects of Intellectual Apprehension are to Be Preferred to Light as an Object of Sense Perception, and are to Be Attributed to God as Their Author. Vice of the Mind and Certain Defects are Not Rightly to Be Counted Among Intelligible Things. Defects Themselves Even If They Should Be Counted Among Intelligible Things Should Never Be Put Before Sensible Things. If Light is Visible by God, Much More is the Soul, Even If Vicious, Which in So Far as It Lives is an Intelligible Thing. Passages of Scripture are Adduced by the Manichaeans to the Contrary.

### Chapter 7

How Evil Men are of God, and Not of God

### Chapter 8

The Manichaeans Inquire Whence is Evil and by This Question Think They Have Triumphed. Let Them First Know, Which is Most Easy to Do, that Nothing Can Live Without God. Consummate Evil Cannot Be Known Except by the Knowledge of Consummate Good, Which is God

#### Chapter 9

Augustin Deceived by Familiarity with the Manichaeans, and by the Succession of Victories Over Ignorant Christians Reported by Them. The Manichaeans are Likewise Easily Refuted from the Knowledge of Sin and the Will

#### Chapter 10

Sin is Only from the Will. His Own Life and Will Best Known to Each Individual. What Will is

#### Chapter 11

What Sin is

#### Chapter 12

From the Definitions Given of Sin and Will, He Overthrows the Entire Heresy of the Manichaeans. Likewise from the Just Condemnation of Evil Souls It Follows that They are Evil Not by Nature But by Will. That Souls are Good By Nature, to Which the Pardon of Sins is Granted

#### Chapter 13

From Deliberation on the Evil and on the Good Part It Results that Two Classes of Souls are Not to Be Held to. A Class of Souls Enticing to Shameful Deeds Having Been Conceded, It Does Not Follow that These are Evil by Nature, that the Others are Supreme Good

#### Chapter 14

Again It is Shown from the Utility of Repenting that Souls are Not by Nature Evil. So Sure a Demonstration is Not Contradicted Except from the Habit of Erring

#### Chapter 15

He Prays for His Friends Whom He Has Had as Associates in Error



# Concerning Two Souls, Against the Manichaeans

ONE BOOK.

## CHAPTER 1

BY WHAT COURSE OF REASONING THE ERROR OF THE MANICHAEANS CONCERNING TWO SOULS, ONE OF WHICH IS NOT FROM GOD, IS REFUTED. EVERY SOUL, INASMUCH AS IT IS A CERTAIN LIFE, CAN HAVE ITS EXISTENCE ONLY FROM GOD THE SOURCE OF LIFE

1. Through the assisting mercy of God, the snares of the Manichaeans having been broken to pieces and left behind, having been restored at length to the bosom of the Catholic Church, I am disposed now at least to consider and to deplore my recent wretchedness. For there were many things that I ought to have done to prevent the seeds of the most true religion wholesomely implanted in me from boyhood, from being banished from my mind, having been uprooted by the error and fraud of false and deceitful men. For, in the first place, if I had soberly and diligently considered, with prayerful and pious mind, those two kinds of souls to which they attributed natures and properties so distinct that they wished one to be regarded as of the very substance of God, but were not even willing that God should be accepted as the author of the other; perhaps it would have appeared to me, intent on learning, that there is no life whatsoever, which, by the very fact of its being life and in so far as it is life at all, does not pertain to the supreme source and beginning of life, which we must acknowledge to be nothing else than the supreme and only and true God. Wherefore there is no reason why we should not confess, that those souls which the Manichaeans call evil are either devoid of life and so not souls, neither will anything positively or negatively, neither follow after nor flee from anything; or, if they live so that they can be souls, and act as the Manichaeans suppose, in

no way do they live unless by life, and if it be an established fact, as it is, that Christ has said: "I am the life," that all souls seeing that they cannot be souls except by living were created and fashioned by Christ, that is, by the Life.

## CHAPTER 2

IF THE LIGHT THAT IS PERCEIVED BY SENSE HAS GOD FOR ITS AUTHOR, AS THE MANICHAEANS ACKNOWLEDGE, MUCH MORE THE SOUL WHICH IS PERCEIVED BY INTELLECT ALONE

2. But if at that time my thought was not able to bear and sustain the question concerning life and partaking of life, which is truly a great question, and one that requires much calm discussion among the learned, I might perchance have had power to discover that which to every man considering himself, without a study of the individual parts, is perfectly evident, namely, that everything we are said to know and to understand, we comprehend either by bodily sense or by mental operation. That the five bodily senses are commonly enumerated as sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, than all of which intellect is immeasurably more noble and excellent, who would have been so ungrateful and impious as not to concede to me; which being established and confirmed, we should have seen how it follows, that whatsoever things are perceived by touch or sight or in any bodily manner at all, are by so much inferior to those things that we comprehend intellectually as the senses are inferior to the intellect. Wherefore, since all life, and so every soul, can be perceived by no bodily sense, but by the intellect alone, whereas while yonder sun and moon and every luminary that is beheld by these mortal eyes, the Manichaeans themselves also say must be attributed to the true and good God, it is the height of madness to claim that that belongs to God which we observe bodily; but, on the other hand, to think that what we receive not only by the mind, but by the highest form of mind, namely, reason and intellect, that is life, whatsoever it may be called, nevertheless life, should be deprived and bereft of the same God as its author. For if having invoked God, I had asked myself what living is, how inscrutable it is to every bodily sense, how absolutely incorporeal it is, could not I have answered? Or would not the Manichaeans also confess not only that the souls they detest live, but that

they live also immortally? and that Christ's saying: "Send the dead to bury their dead," was uttered not with reference to those not living at all, but with reference to sinners, which is the only death of the immortal soul; as when Paul writes: "The widow that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth," he says that she at the same time is dead, and alive. Wherefore I should have directed attention not to the great degree of contamination in which the sinful soul lives, but only to the fact itself that it lives. But if I cannot perceive except by an act of intelligence, I believe it would have come into the mind, that by as much as any mind whatever is to be preferred to the light which we see through these eyes, by so much we should give to intellect the preference over the eyes themselves.

### CHAPTER 3

HOW IT IS PROVED THAT EVERY BODY ALSO IS FROM GOD. THAT THE SOUL WHICH IS CALLED EVIL BY THE MANICHAEANS IS BETTER THAN LIGHT

They also affirm that the light is from the Father of Christ: should I then have doubted that every soul is from Him? But not even then, as a man forsooth so inexperienced and so youthful as I was, should I have been in doubt as to the derivation not only of the soul, but also of the body, nay of everything whatsoever, from Him, if I had reverently and cautiously reflected on what form is, or what has been formed, what shape is and what has been endued with shape.

3. But not to speak at present concerning the body, I lament concerning the soul, concerning spontaneous and vivid movement, concerning action, concerning life, concerning immortality; in fine, I lament that I, miserable, should have believed that anything could have all these properties apart from the goodness of God, which properties, great as they are, I sadly neglected to consider; this I think, should be to me a matter of groaning and of weeping. I should have inwardly pondered these things, I should have discussed them with myself, I should have referred them to others, I should have propounded the inquiry, what the power of knowing is, seeing there is nothing in man that we can compare to this excellency? And as men, if only they had been men, would have granted me this, I should have inquired whether seeing with these eyes is knowing? In case they had answered

negatively, I should first have concluded, that mental intelligence is vastly inferior to ocular sensation; then I should have added, that what we perceive by means of a better thing must needs be judged to be itself better. Who would not grant this? I should have gone on to inquire, whether that soul which they call evil is an object of ocular sensation or of mental intelligence? They would have acknowledged that the latter is the case. All which things having been agreed upon and confirmed between us, I should have shown how it follows, that that soul forsooth which they execrate, is better than that light which they venerate, since the former is an object of mental knowledge, the latter an object of corporeal sense perception. But here perhaps they would have halted, and would have refused to follow the lead of reason, so great is the power of inveterate opinion and of falsehood long defended and believed. But I should have pressed yet more upon them halting, not harshly, not in puerile fashion, not obstinately; I should have repeated the things that had been conceded, and have shown how they must be conceded. I should have exhorted that they consult in common, that they may see clearly what must be denied to us; whether they think it false that intellectual perception is to be preferred to these carnal organs of sight, or that what is known by means of the excellency of the mind is more excellent than what is known by vile corporeal sensation; whether they would be unwilling to confess that those souls which they think heterogenous, can be known only by intellectual perception, that is, by the excellency itself of the mind; whether they would wish to deny that the sun and the moon are made known to us only by means of these eyes. But if they had replied that no one of these things could be denied otherwise than most absurdly and most impudently, I should have urged that they ought not to doubt but that the light whose worthiness of worship they proclaim, is viler than that soul which they admonish men to flee.

#### CHAPTER 4

##### EVEN THE SOUL OF A FLY IS MORE EXCELLENT THAN THE LIGHT

4. And here, if perchance in their confusion they had inquired of me whether I thought that the soul even of a fly surpasses that light, I should have replied, yes, nor should it have troubled me that the fly is little, but it should have confirmed me that it is alive. For it is inquired, what causes

those members so diminutive to grow, what leads so minute a body here and there according to its natural appetite, what moves its feet in numerical order when it is running, what regulates and gives vibration to its wings when flying? This thing whatever it is in so small a creature towers up so prominently to one well considering, that it excels any lightning flashing upon the eyes.

## CHAPTER 5

HOW VICIOUS SOULS, HOWEVER WORTHY OF CONDEMNATION THEY MAY BE, EXCEL THE LIGHT WHICH IS PRAISEWORTHY IN ITS KIND

Certainly nobody doubts that whatever is an object of intellectual perception, by virtue of divine laws surpasses in excellence every sensible object and consequently also this light. For what, I ask, do we perceive by thought, if not that it is one thing to know with the mind, and another thing to experience bodily sensations, and that the former is incomparably more sublime than the latter, and so that intelligible things must needs be preferred to sensible things, since the intellect itself is so highly exalted above the senses?

5. Hence this also I should perchance have known, which manifestly follows, since injustice and intemperance and other vices of the mind are not objects of sense, but of intellect, how it comes about that these too which we detest and consider condemnable, yet in as much as they are objects of intellect, can outrank this light however praiseworthy it may be in its kind. For it is borne in upon the mind subjecting itself well to God, that, first of all, not everything that we praise is to be preferred to everything that we find fault with. For in praising the purest lead, I do not therefore put a higher value upon it than upon the gold that I find fault with. For everything must be considered in its kind. I disapprove of a lawyer ignorant of many statutes, yet I so prefer him to the most approved tailor, that I should think him incomparably superior. But I praise the tailor because he is thoroughly skilled in his own craft, while I rightly blame the lawyer because he imperfectly fulfills the functions of his profession. Wherefore I should have found out that the light which in its own kind is perfect, is rightly to be praised; yet because it is included in the number of sensible things, which

class must needs yield to the class of intelligible things, it must be ranked below unjust and intemperate souls, since these are intelligible; although we may without injustice judge these to be most worthy of condemnation. For in the case of these we ask that they be reconciled to God, not that they be preferred to that lightning. Wherefore, if any one had contended that this luminary is from God, I should not have opposed; but rather I should have said, that souls, even vicious ones, not in so far as they are vicious, but in so far as they are souls, must be acknowledged to be creatures of God.

## CHAPTER 6

WHETHER EVEN VICES THEMSELVES AS OBJECTS OF INTELLECTUAL APPREHENSION ARE TO BE PREFERRED TO LIGHT AS AN OBJECT OF SENSE PERCEPTION, AND ARE TO BE ATTRIBUTED TO GOD AS THEIR AUTHOR. VICE OF THE MIND AND CERTAIN DEFECTS ARE NOT RIGHTLY TO BE COUNTED AMONG INTELLIGIBLE THINGS. DEFECTS THEMSELVES EVEN IF THEY SHOULD BE COUNTED AMONG INTELLIGIBLE THINGS SHOULD NEVER BE PUT BEFORE SENSIBLE THINGS. IF LIGHT IS VISIBLE BY GOD, MUCH MORE IS THE SOUL, EVEN IF VICIOUS, WHICH IN SO FAR AS IT LIVES IS AN INTELLIGIBLE THING. PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE ARE ADDUCED BY THE MANICHAEANS TO THE CONTRARY

At this point, in case some one of them, cautious and watchful, now also more studious than pertinacious, had admonished me that the inquiry is not about vicious souls but about vices themselves, which, seeing that they are not known by corporeal sense, and yet are known, can only be received as objects of intellectual apprehension, which if they excel all objects of sense, why can we not agree in attributing light to God as its author, but only a sacrilegious person would say that God is the author of vices; I should have replied to the man, if either on the spur of the moment, as is customary to the worshippers of the good God, a solution of this question had darted like lightning from on high, or a solution had been previously prepared. If I had not deserved or was unable to avail myself of either of these methods, I should have deferred the undertaking, and should have confessed that the thing propounded was difficult to discern and arduous. I should have withdrawn to myself, prostrated myself before God, groaned aloud asking Him not to suffer me to halt in mid space, when I should have moved forward with assured arguments, asking Him that I might not be compelled by a doubtful question either to subordinate intelligible things to sensible, and to yield, or to call Himself the author of vices; since either of these

alternatives would have been absolutely full of falsehood and impiety. I can by no means suppose that He would have deserted me in such a frame of mind. Rather, in His own ineffable way, He would have admonished me to consider again and again whether vices of mind concerning which I was so troubled should be reckoned among intelligible things. But that I might find out, on account of the weakness of my inner eye, which rightly befell me on account of my sins, I should have devised some sort of stage for gazing upon spiritual things in visible things themselves, of which we have by no means a surer knowledge, but a more confident familiarity. Therefore I should straightway have inquired, what properly pertains to the sensation of the eyes. I should have found that it is the color, the dominion of which the light holds. For these are the things that no other sense touches, for the motions and magnitudes and intervals and figures of bodies, although they also can be perceived by the eyes, yet to perceive such is not their peculiar function, but belongs also to touch. Whence I should have gathered that by as much as yonder light excels other corporeal and sensible things, by so much is sight more noble than the other senses. The light therefore having been selected from all the things that are perceived by bodily sense, by this [light] I should have striven, and in this of necessity I should have placed that stage of my inquiry. I should have gone on to consider what might be done in this way, and thus I should have reasoned with myself: If yonder sun, conspicuous by its brightness and sufficing for day by its light, should little by little decline in our sight into the likeness of the moon, would we perceive anything else with our eyes than light however refulgent, yet seeking light by reason of not seeing what had been, and using it for seeing what was present? Therefore we should not see the decline, but the light that should survive the decline. But since we should not see, we should not perceive; for whatever we perceive by sight must necessarily be seen; wherefore if that decline were perceived neither by sight nor by any other sense, it cannot be reckoned among objects of sense. For nothing is an object of sense that cannot be perceived by sense. Let us apply now the consideration to virtue, by whose intellectual light we most fittingly say the mind shines. Again, a certain decline from this light of virtue, not destroying the soul, but obscuring it, is called vice. Therefore also vice can by no means be reckoned among objects of intellectual perception, as that decline of light is rightly excluded from the number of objects of sense

perception. Yet what remains of soul, that is that which lives and is soul is just as much an object of intellectual perception as that is an object of sense perception which should shine in this visible luminary after any imaginable degree of decline. And so the soul, in so far as it is soul and partakes of life, without which it can in no way be soul, is most correctly to be preferred to all objects of sense perception. Wherefore it is most erroneous to say that any soul is not from God, from whom you boast that the sun and moon have their existence.

7. But if now it should be thought fit to designate as objects of sense perception not only all those things that we perceive by the senses, but also all those things that though not perceiving by the senses we judge of by means of the body, as of darkness through the eyes, of silence through the ears,—for not by seeing darkness and not by hearing silence do we know of their existence,—and again, in the case of objects of intellectual perception, not those things only which we see illuminated by the mind, as is wisdom itself, but also those things which by the illumination itself we avoid, such as foolishness, which I might fittingly designate mental darkness; I should have made no controversy about a word, but should have dissolved the whole question by an easy division, and straightway I should have proved to those giving good attention, that by the divine law of truth intelligible subsistences are to be preferred to sensible subsistences, not the decline of these subsistences, even though we should choose to call these intelligible, those sensible. Wherefore, that those who acknowledge that these visible luminaries and those intelligible souls are subsistences, are in every way compelled to grant and to attribute the sublimer part to souls; but that defects of either kind cannot be preferred the one to the other, for they are only privative and indicate nonexistence, and therefore have precisely the same force as negations themselves. For when we say, It is not gold, and, It is not virtue, although there is the greatest possible difference between gold and virtue, yet there is no difference between the negations that we adjoin to them. But that it is worse indeed not to be virtue than not to be gold, no sane man doubts. Who does not know that the difference lies not in the negations themselves, but in the things to which they are adjoined? For by as much as virtue is more excellent than gold, by so much is it more wretched to be in want of virtue than of gold. Wherefore, since intelligible



things excel sensible things, we rightly feel greater repugnance towards defect in intelligible than in sensible things, esteeming not the defects, but the things that are deficient more or less precious. From which now it appears, that defect of light, which is intelligible, is far more wretched than defect of the sensible light, because, forsooth, life which is known is by far more precious than yonder light which is seen.

8. This being the case, who will dare, while attributing sun and moon, and whatever is refulgent in the stars, nay in this fire of ours and in this visible earthly life, to God, to decline to grant that any souls whatsoever, which are not souls except by the fact of their being perfectly alive, since in this fact alone life has the precedence of light, are from God. And since he speaks truth who says, In as far as a thing shines it is from God, would I speak falsely, mighty God, if I should say, In so far as a thing lives it is from God? Let not, I beseech thee, blindness of intellect and perversions of mind be increased to such an extent that men may fail to know these things. But however great their error and pertinacity might have been, trusting in these arguments and armed therewith, I believe that when I should have laid the matter before them thus considered and canvassed, and should have calmly conferred with them, I should have feared lest any one of them should have seemed to me to be of any consequence, should he endeavor to subordinate or even to compare to bodily sense, or to those things that pertain to bodily sense as objects of knowledge, either intellect or those things that are perceived (not by way of defect) by the intellect. Which point having been settled, how would he or any other have dared to deny that such souls as he would consider evil, yet since they are souls, are to be reckoned in the number of intelligible things, nor are objects of intellectual perception by way of defect? This is on the supposition that souls are souls only by being alive. For if they were intellectually perceived as vicious through defect, being vicious by lack of virtue, yet they are perceived as souls not through defect, for they are souls by reason of being alive. Nor can it be maintained that presence of life is a cause of defect, for by as much as anything is defective, by so much is it severed from life.

9. Since therefore it would have been every way evident that no souls can be separated from that Author from whom yonder light is not separated,

whatever they might have now adduced I should not have accepted, and should rather have admonished them that they should choose with me to follow those who maintain that whatever is, since it is, and in whatever degree it is, has its existence from the one God.

## CHAPTER 7

### HOW EVIL MEN ARE OF GOD, AND NOT OF GOD

They might have cited against me those words of the gospel: “Ye therefore do not hear, because ye are not of God;” “Ye are of your father the devil.” I also should have cited: “All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made,” and this of the Apostle: “One God of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things,” and again from the same Apostle: “Of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things, to Him be glory.” I should have exhorted those men (if indeed I had found them men), that we should presume upon nothing as if we had found it out, but should rather inquire of the masters who would demonstrate the agreement and harmony of those passages that seem to be discordant. For when in one and the same Scriptural authority we read: “All things are of God,” and elsewhere: “Ye are not of God,” since it is wrong rashly to condemn books of Scripture, who would not have seen that a skilled teacher should be found who would know a solution of this problem, from whom assuredly if endowed with good intellectual powers, and a “spiritual man,” as is said by divine inspiration (for he would necessarily have favored the true arguments concerning the intelligible and sensible nature, which, as far as I can, I have conducted and handled, nay he would have disclosed them far better and more convincingly); we should have heard nothing else concerning this problem, except, as might happen, that there is no class of souls but has its existence from God, and that it is yet rightly said to sinners and unbelievers: “Ye are not of God.” For we also, perchance, Divine aid having been implored, should have been able easily to see, that it is one thing to live and another to sin, and (although life in sin may be called death in comparison with just life, and while in one man it may be found, that he is at the same time alive and a sinner) that so far as he is alive, he is of God, so far as he is a sinner he is not of God. In which division we use that alternative that suits our sentiment; so that when

we wish to insist upon the omnipotence of God as Creator, we may say even to sinners that they are of God. For we are speaking to those who are contained in some class, we are speaking to those having animal life, we are speaking to rational beings, we are speaking lastly—and this applies especially to the matter in hand—to living beings, all which things are essentially divine functions. But when our purpose is to convict evil men, we rightly say: “Ye are not of God.” For we speak to them as averse to truth, unbelieving, criminal, infamous, and, to sum up all in one term—sinners, all of which things are undoubtedly not of God. Therefore what wonder is it, if Christ says to sinners, convicting them of this very thing that they were sinners and did not believe in Him: “Ye are not of God;” and on the other hand, without prejudice to the former statement: “All things were made through Him,” and “All things are of God?” For if not to believe Christ, to repudiate Christ’s advent, not to accept Christ, was a sure mark of souls that are not of God; and so it was said: “Ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God;” how would that saying of the apostle be true that occurs in the memorable beginning of the gospel: “He came unto his own things, and his own people did not receive him?” Whence his own if they did not receive him; or whence therefore not his own because they did not receive him, unless that sinners by virtue of being men belong to God, but by virtue of being sinners belong to the devil? He who says: “His own people received him not” had reference to nature; but he who says: “Ye are not of God.” had reference to will; for the evangelist was commending the works of God, Christ was censuring the sins of men.

## CHAPTER 8

THE MANICHAEANS INQUIRE WHENCE IS EVIL AND BY THIS QUESTION THINK THEY HAVE TRIUMPHED. LET THEM FIRST KNOW, WHICH IS MOST EASY TO DO, THAT NOTHING CAN LIVE WITHOUT GOD. CONSUMMATE EVIL CANNOT BE KNOWN EXCEPT BY THE KNOWLEDGE OF CONSUMMATE GOOD, WHICH IS GOD

Here perchance some one may say: Whence are sins themselves, and whence is evil in general? If from man, whence is man? if from an angel, whence is the angel? When it is said, however truly and rightly, that these are from God, it nevertheless seems to those unskillful and possessed of little power to look into recondite matters, that evils and sins are thereby

connected, as by a sort of chain, to God. By this question they think themselves triumphant, as if forsooth to ask were to know;—would it were so, for in that case no one would be more knowing than myself. Yet very often in controversy the propounder of a great question, while impersonating the great teacher, is himself more ignorant in the matter concerning which he would frighten his opponent, than he whom he would frighten.

These therefore suppose that they are superior to the common run, because the former ask questions that the latter cannot answer. If therefore when I most unfortunately was associated with them, not in the position in which I have now for some time been, they had raised these objections when I had brought forward this argument, I should have said: I ask that you meanwhile agree with me, which is most easy, that if nothing can shine without God, much less can anything live without God. Let us not persist in such monstrous opinions as to maintain that any souls whatsoever have life apart from God. For perchance it may so happen that with me you are ignorant as to this thing, namely whence is evil, let us then learn either simultaneously or in any order, I care not what. For what if knowledge of the perfection of evil is impossible to man without knowledge of the perfection of good? For we should not know darkness if we were always in darkness. But the notion of light does not allow its opposite to be unknown. But the highest good is that than which there is nothing higher. But God is good and than Him nothing can be higher. God therefore is the highest good. Let us therefore together so recognize God, and thus what we seek too hastily will not be hidden from us. Do you suppose then that the knowledge of God is a matter of small account or desert. For what other reward is there for us than life eternal, which is to know God? For God the Master says: “But this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only and true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” For the soul, although it is immortal, yet because aversion from the knowledge of God is rightly called its death, when it is converted to God, the reward of eternal life to be attained is that knowledge; so that this is, as has been said, eternal life. But no one can be converted to God, except he turn himself away from this world. This for myself I feel to be arduous and exceedingly difficult, whether it is easy to you, God Himself would have seen. I should have been

inclined to think it easy to you, had I not been moved by the fact, that, since the world from which we are commanded to turn away is visible, and the apostle says: "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are unseen are eternal," you ascribe more importance to the judgment of these eyes than to that of the mind, asserting and believing as you do that there is no shining feather that does not shine from God; and that there are living souls that do not live from God. These and like things I should either have said to them or considered with myself, for even then, supplicating God with all my bowels, so to speak, and examining as attentively as possible the Scriptures, I should perchance have been able either to say such things or to think them, so far as was necessary for my salvation.

## CHAPTER 9

AUGUSTIN DECEIVED BY FAMILIARITY WITH THE MANICHAEANS, AND BY THE SUCCESSION OF VICTORIES OVER IGNORANT CHRISTIANS REPORTED BY THEM. THE MANICHAEANS ARE LIKEWISE EASILY REFUTED FROM THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN AND THE WILL

But two things especially, which easily lay hold upon that unwary age, urged me through wonderful circuits. One of these was familiarity, suddenly, by a certain false semblance of goodness, wrapped many times around my neck as a certain sinuous chain. The other was, that I was almost always noxiously victorious in arguing with ignorant Christians who yet eagerly attempted, each as he could, to defend their faith. By which frequent success the ardor of youth was kindled, and by its own impulse rashly verged upon the great evil of stubbornness. For this kind of wrangling, after I had become an auditor among them, whatever I was able to do either by my own genius, such as it was, or by reading the works of others, I most gladly devoted to them alone. Accordingly from their speeches ardor in disputations was daily increased, from success in disputations love for them [the Manichaeans]. Whence it resulted that whatever they said, as if affected by certain strange disorders, I approved of as true, not because I knew it to be true, but because I wished it to be. So it came about that, however slowly and cautiously, yet for a long time I followed men that preferred a sleek straw to a living soul.

12. So be it, I was not able at that time to distinguish and discern sensible from intelligible things, carnal forsooth from spiritual. It did not belong to age, nor to discipline, nor even to any habit, nor, finally, to any deserts; for it is a matter of no small joy and felicitation: had I not thus been able at length even to grasp that which in the judgment of all men nature itself by the laws of the most High God has established?

#### CHAPTER 10

SIN IS ONLY FROM THE WILL. HIS OWN LIFE AND WILL BEST KNOWN TO EACH INDIVIDUAL. WHAT WILL IS

For let any men whatever, if only no madness has broken them loose from the common sense of the human race, bring whatever zeal they like for judging, whatever ignorance, nay whatever slowness of mind, I should like to find out what they would have replied to me had I asked, whether a man would seem to them to have sinned by whose hand while he was asleep another should have written something disgraceful? Who doubts that they would have denied that it is a sin, and have exclaimed against it so vehemently that they might perchance have been enraged that I should have thought them proper objects of such a question? Of whom reconciled and restored to equanimity, as best I could do it, I should have begged that they would not take it amiss if I asked them another thing just as manifest, just as completely within the knowledge of all. Then I should have asked, if some stronger person had done some evil thing by the hand of one not sleeping but conscious, yet with the rest of his members bound and in constraint, whether because he knew it, though absolutely unwilling, he should be held guilty of any sin? And here all marvelling that I should ask such questions, would reply without hesitation, that he had absolutely not sinned at all. Why so? Because whoever has done anything evil by means of one unconscious or unable to resist, the latter can by no means be justly condemned. And precisely why this is so, if I should inquire of the human nature in these men, I should easily bring out the desired answer, by asking in this manner: Suppose that the sleeper already knew what the other would do with his hand, and of purpose aforethought, having drunk so much as would prevent his being awakened, should go to sleep, in order to deceive some one with an oath. Would any amount of sleep suffice to prove his

innocence? What else than a guilty man would one pronounce him? But if he has also willingly been bound that he may deceive some one by this pretext, in what respect then would those chains profit as a means of relieving him of sin? Although bound by these he was really not able to resist, as in the other case the sleeper was absolutely ignorant of what he was then doing. Is there therefore any possibility of doubting that both should be judged to have sinned? Which things having been conceded, I should have argued, that sin is indeed nowhere but in the will, since this consideration also would have helped me, that justice holds guilty those sinning by evil will alone, although they may have been unable to accomplish what they willed.

13. For who could have said that, in adducing these considerations, I was dwelling upon obscure and recondite things, where on account of the fewness of those able to understand, either fraud or suspicion of ostentation is accustomed to arise? Let that distinction between intelligible and sensible things withdraw for a little: let me not be found fault with for following up slow minds with the stimuli of subtle disputations. Permit me to know that I live, permit me to know that I will to live. If in this the human race agrees, as our life is known to us, so also is our will. Nor when we become possessed of this knowledge, is there any occasion to fear lest any one should convince us that we may be deceived; for no one can be deceived as to whether he does not live, or wishes nothing. I do not think that I have adduced anything obscure, and my concern is rather lest some should find fault with me for dwelling on things that are too manifest. But let us consider the bearing of these things.

14. Sinning therefore takes place only by exercise of will. But our will is very well known to us; for neither should I know that I will, if I did not know what will itself is. Accordingly, it is thus defined: will is a movement of mind, no one compelling, either for not losing or for obtaining something. Why therefore could not I have so defined it then? Was it difficult to see that one unwilling is contrary to one willing, just as the left hand is contrary to the right, not as black to white? For the same thing cannot be at the same time black and white. But whoever is placed between two men is on the left hand with reference to one, on the right with

reference to the other. One man is both on the right hand and on the left hand at the same time, but by no means both to the one man. So indeed one mind may be at the same time unwilling and willing, but it cannot be at the same time unwilling and willing with reference to one and the same thing. For when any one unwillingly does anything; if you ask him whether he wished to do it, he says that he did not. Likewise if you ask whether he wished not to do it, he replies that he did. So you will find him unwilling with reference to doing, willing with reference to not doing, that is to say, one mind at the same time having both attitudes, but each referring to different things. Why do I say this? Because if we should again ask wherefore though unwilling he does this, he will say that he is compelled. For every one also who does a thing unwillingly is compelled, and every one who is compelled, if he does a thing, does it only unwillingly. It follows that he that is willing is free from compulsion, even if any one thinks himself compelled. And in this manner every one who willingly does a thing is not compelled, and whoever is not compelled, either does it willingly or not at all. Since nature itself proclaims these things in all men whom we can interrogate without absurdity, from the boy even to the old man, from literary sport even to the throne of the wise, why then should I not have seen that in the definition of will should be put, “no one compelling,” which now as if with greater experience most cautiously I have done. But if this is everywhere manifest, and promptly occurs to all not by instruction but by nature, what is there left that seems obscure, unless perchance it be concealed from some one, that when we wish for something, we will, and our mind is moved towards it, and we either have it or do not have it, and if we have it we will to retain it, if we have it not, to acquire it? Wherefore everyone who wills, wills either not to lose something or to obtain it. Hence if all these things are clearer than day, as they are, nor are they given to my conception alone, but by the liberality of truth itself to the whole human race, why could I not have said even at that time: Will is a movement of the mind, no one compelling, either for not losing or for obtaining something?

## CHAPTER 11

### WHAT SIN IS



Some one will say: What assistance would this have furnished you against the Manichaeans? Wait a moment; permit me first also to define sin, which, every mind reads divinely written in itself, cannot exist apart from will. Sin therefore is the will to retain and follow after what justice forbids, and from which it is free to abstain. Although if it be not free, it is not will. But I have preferred to define more roughly than precisely. Should I not also have carefully examined those obscure books, whence I might have learned that no one is worthy of blame or punishment who either wills what justice does not prohibit him from willing, or does not do what he is not able to do? Do not shepherds on mountains, poets in theatres, unlearned in social intercourse, learned in libraries, masters in schools, priests in consecrated places, and the human race throughout the whole world, sing out these things? But if no one is worthy of blame and condemnation, who either does not act against the prohibition of justice, or who does not do what he cannot do, yet every sin is blameworthy and condemnable, who doubts then that it is sin, when willing is unjust, and not willing is free. And hence that definition is both true and easy to understand, and not only now but then also could have been spoken by me: Sin is the will of retaining or of obtaining, what justice forbids, and whence it is free to abstain?

## CHAPTER 12

FROM THE DEFINITIONS GIVEN OF SIN AND WILL, HE OVERTHROWS THE ENTIRE HERESY OF THE MANICHAEANS. LIKEWISE FROM THE JUST CONDEMNATION OF EVIL SOULS IT FOLLOWS THAT THEY ARE EVIL NOT BY NATURE BUT BY WILL. THAT SOULS ARE GOOD BY NATURE, TO WHICH THE PARDON OF SINS IS GRANTED

16. Come now, let us see in what respect these things would have aided us. Much every way, so that I should have desired nothing more; for they end the whole cause; for whoever consulting in the inner mind, where they are more pronounced and assured, the secrets of his own conscience, and the divine laws absolutely imposed upon nature, grants that these two definitions of will and sin are true, condemns without any hesitation by the fewest and the briefest, but plainly the most invincible reasons, the whole heresy of the Manichaeans. Which can be thus considered. They say that there are two kinds of souls, the one good, which is in such a way from God, that it is said not to have been made by Him out of any material or out

of nothing, but to have proceeded as a certain part from the very substance itself of God; the other evil, which they believe and strive to get others to believe pertains to God in no way whatever; and so they maintain that the one is the perfection of good, but the other the perfection of evil, and that these two classes were at one time distinct but are now commingled. The character and the cause of this commingling I had not yet heard; but nevertheless I could have inquired whether that evil kind of souls, before it was mingled with the good, had any will. For if not, it was without sin and innocent, and so by no means evil. But if evil in such a way, that though without will, as fire, yet if it should touch the good it would violate and corrupt it; how impious it is to believe that the nature of evil is powerful enough to change any part of God, and that the Highest Good is corruptible and violable! But if the will was present, assuredly there was present, no one compelling, a movement of the mind either towards not losing something or obtaining something. But this something was either good, or was thought to be good, for not otherwise could it be earnestly desired. But in supreme evil, before the commingling which they maintain, there never was any good. Whence then could there be in it either the knowledge or the thought of good? Did they wish for nothing that was in themselves, and earnestly desire that true good which was without? That will must truly be declared worthy of distinguished and great praise by which is earnestly desired the supreme and true good. Whence then in supreme evil was this movement of mind most worthy of so great praise? Did they seek it for the sake of injuring it? In the first place, the argument comes to the same thing. For he who wishes to injure, wishes to deprive another of some good for the sake of some good of his own. There was therefore in them either a knowledge of good or an opinion of good, which ought by no means to belong to supreme evil. In the second place, whence had they known, that good placed outside of themselves, which they designed to injure, existed at all. If they had intellectually perceived it, what is more excellent than such a mind? Is there anything else for which the whole energy of good men is put forth except the knowledge of that supreme and sincere good? What therefore is now scarcely conceded to a few good and just men, was mere evil, no good assisting, then able to accomplish? But if those souls bore bodies and saw the supreme good with their eyes, what tongues, what hearts, what intellects suffice for lauding and proclaiming those eyes, with

which the minds of just men can scarcely be compared? How great good things we find in supreme evil! For if to see God is evil, God is not a good; but God is a good; therefore to see God is good; and I know not what can be compared to this good. Since to see anything is good, whence can it be made out that to be able to see is evil? Therefore whatever in those eyes or in those minds brought it about, that the divine essence could be seen by them, brought about a great thing and a good thing most worthy of ineffable praise. But if it was not brought about, but it was such in itself and eternal, it is difficult to find anything better than this evil.

17. Lastly, that these souls may have nothing of these praiseworthy things which by the reasonings of the Manichaeans they are compelled to have, I should have asked, whether God condemns any or no souls. If none, there is no judgment of rewards and punishments, no providence, and the world is administered by chance rather than by reason, or rather is not administered at all. For the name administration must not be given to chances. But if it is impious for all those that are bound by any religion to believe this, it remains either that there is condemnation of some souls, or that there are no sins. But if there are no sins, neither is there any evil. Which if the Manichaeans should say, they would slay their heresy with a single blow. Therefore they and I agree that some souls are condemned by divine law and judgment. But if these souls are good, what is that justice? If evil, are they so by nature, or by will? But by nature souls can in no way be evil. Whence do we teach this. From the above definitions of will and sin. For to speak of souls, and that they are evil, and that they do not sin, is full of madness; but to say that they sin without will, is great craziness, and to hold any one guilty of sin for not doing what he could not do, belongs to the height of iniquity and insanity. Wherefore whatever these souls do, if they do it by nature not by will, that is, if they are wanting in a movement of mind free both for doing and not doing, if finally no power of abstaining from their work is conceded to them; we cannot hold that the sin is theirs. But all confess both that evil souls are justly, and souls that have not sinned are unjustly condemned; therefore they confess that those souls are evil that sin. But these, as reason teaches, do not sin. Therefore the extraneous class of evil souls of the Manichaeans, whatever it may be, is a non-entity.

18. Let us now look at that good class of souls, which again they exalt to such a degree as to say that it is the very substance of God. But how much better it is that each one should recognize his own rank and merit, nor be so puffed up with sacrilegious pride as to believe that as often as he experiences a change in himself it is the substance of that supreme good, which devout reason holds and teaches to be unchangeable! For behold! since it is manifest that souls do not sin in not being such as they cannot be; it follows that these supposititious souls, whatever they may be, do not sin at all, and moreover that they are absolutely non-existent; it remains that since there are sins, they find none to whom to attribute them except the good class of souls and the substance of God. But especially are they pressed by Christian authority; for never have they denied that forgiveness of sins is granted when any one has been converted to God; never have they said (as they have said of many other passages) that some corrupter has interpolated this into the divine Scriptures. To whom then are sins attributed? If to those evil souls of the alien class, these also can become good, can possess the kingdom of God with Christ. Which denying, they [the Manichaeans] have no other class except those souls which they maintain are of the substance of God. It remains that they acknowledge that not only these latter also, but these alone sin. But I make no contention about their being alone in sinning; yet they sin. But are they compelled to sin by being commingled with evil? If so compelled that there was no power of resisting, they do not sin. If it is in their power to resist, and they voluntarily consent, we are compelled to find out through their [the Manichaeans] teaching, why so great good things in supreme evil, why this evil in supreme good, unless it be that neither is that which they bring into suspicion evil, nor is that which they pervert by superstition supreme good?

#### CHAPTER 13

FROM DELIBERATION ON THE EVIL AND ON THE GOOD PART IT RESULTS THAT TWO CLASSES OF SOULS ARE NOT TO BE HELD TO. A CLASS OF SOULS ENTICING TO SHAMEFUL DEEDS HAVING BEEN CONCEDED, IT DOES NOT FOLLOW THAT THESE ARE EVIL BY NATURE, THAT THE OTHERS ARE SUPREME GOOD

19. But if I had taught, or at any rate had myself learned, that they rave and err regarding those two classes of souls, why should I have thenceforth

thought them worthy of being heard or consulted about anything? That I might learn hence, that these two kinds of souls are pointed out, which in the course of deliberation assent puts now on the evil side, now on the good? Why is not this rather the sign of one soul which by free will can be borne here and there, swayed hither and thither? For it was my own experience to feel that I am one, considering evil and good and choosing one or the other, but for the most part the one pleases, the other is fitting, placed in the midst of which we fluctuate. Nor is it to be wondered at, for we are now so constituted that through the flesh we can be affected by sensual pleasure, and through the spirit by honorable considerations. Am I not therefore compelled to acknowledge two souls? Nay, we can better and with far less difficulty recognize two classes of good things, of which neither is alien from God as its author, one soul acted upon from diverse directions, the lower and the higher, or to speak more correctly, the external and the internal. These are the two classes which a little while ago we considered under the names sensible and intelligible, which we now prefer to call more familiarly carnal and spiritual. But it has been made difficult for us to abstain from carnal things, since our truest bread is spiritual. For with great labor we now eat this bread. For neither without punishment for the sin of transgression have we been changed from immortal into mortal. So it happens, that when we strive after better things, habit formed by connection with the flesh and our sins in some way begin to militate against us and to put obstacles in our way, some foolish persons with most obtuse superstition suspect that there is another kind of souls which is not of God.

20. However even if it be conceded to them that we are enticed to shameful deeds by another inferior kind of souls, they do not thence make it evident that those enticing are evil by nature, or those enticed, supremely good. For it may be, the former of their own will, by striving after what was not lawful, that is, by sinning, from being good have become evil; and again they may be made good, but in such manner that for a long time they remain in sin, and by a certain occult suasion traduce to themselves other souls. Then, they may not be absolutely evil, but in their own kind, however inferior, they may exercise their own functions without any sin. But those superior souls to whom justice, the directress of things, has assigned a far more excellent activity, if they should wish to follow and to imitate those

inferior ones, become evil, not because they imitate evil souls, but because they imitate in an evil way. By the evil souls is done what is proper to them, by the good what is alien to them is striven after. Hence the former remain in their own grade, the latter are plunged into a lower. It is as when men copy after beasts. For the four-footed horse walks beautifully, but if a man on all fours should imitate him, who would think him worthy even of chaff for food? Rightly therefore we generally disapprove of one who imitates, while we approve of him whom he imitates. But we disapprove not because he has not succeeded, but for wishing to succeed at all. For in the horse we approve of that to which by as much as we prefer man, by so much are we offended that he copies after inferior creatures. So among men, however well the crier may do in sending forth his voice, would not the senator be insane, if he should do it even more clearly and better than the crier? Take an illustration from the heavenly bodies: The moon when shining is praised, and by its course and its changes is quite pleasing to those that pay attention to such things. But if the sun should wish to imitate it (for we may feign that it has desires of this sort ), who would not be greatly and rightly displeased. From which illustrations I wish it to be understood, that even if there are souls (which meanwhile is left an open question ) devoted to bodily offices not by sin but by nature, and even if they are related to us, however inferior they may be, by some inner affinity, they should not be esteemed evil simply because we are evil ourselves in following them and in loving corporeal things. For we sin by loving corporeal things, because by justice we are required and by nature we are able to love spiritual things, and when we do this we are, in our kind, the best and the happiest.

21. Wherefore what proof does deliberation, violently urged in both directions, now prone to sin, now borne on toward right conduct, furnish, that we are compelled to accept two kinds of souls, the nature of one of which is from God, of the other not; when we are free to conjecture so many other causes of alternating states of mind? But that these things are obscure and are to no purpose pried into by blear-eyed minds, whoever is a good judge of things sees. Wherefore those things rather which have been said regarding the will and sin, those things, I say, that supreme justice permits no man using his reason to be ignorant of, those things which if they were taken from us, there is nothing whence the discipline of virtue

may begin, nothing whence it may rise from the death of vices, those things I say considered again and again with sufficient clearness and lucidity convince us that the heresy of the Manichaeans is false.

#### CHAPTER 14

AGAIN IT IS SHOWN FROM THE UTILITY OF REPENTING THAT SOULS ARE NOT BY NATURE EVIL. SO SURE A DEMONSTRATION IS NOT CONTRADICTED EXCEPT FROM THE HABIT OF ERRING

22. Like the foregoing considerations is what I shall now say about repenting. For as among all sane people it is agreed, and this the Manichaeans themselves not only confess but also teach, that to repent of sin is useful. Why shall I now, in this matter, collect the testimonies of the divine Scriptures, which are scattered throughout their pages? It is also the voice of nature; notice of this thing has escaped no fool. We should be undone, if this were not deeply imbedded in our nature. Some one may say that he does not sin; but no barbarity will dare to say, that if one sins he should not repent of it. This being the case, I ask to which of the two kinds of souls does repenting pertain? I know indeed that it can pertain neither to him who does ill nor to him who cannot do well. Wherefore, that I may use the words of the Manichaeans, if a soul of darkness repent of sin, it is not of the substance of supreme evil, if a soul of light, it is not of the substance of supreme good; that disposition of repenting which is profitable testifies alike that the penitent has done ill, and that he could have done well. How, therefore, is there from me nothing of evil, if I have acted unadvisedly, or how can I rightly repent if I have not so done? Hear the other part. How is there from me nothing of good, if in me there is good will, or how do I rightly repent if there is not? Wherefore, either let them deny that there is great utility in repenting, so that they may be driven not only from the Christian name, but from every even imaginary argument for their views, or let them cease to say and to teach that there are two kinds of souls, one of which has nothing of evil, the other nothing of good; for that whole sect is propped up by this two-headed or rather headlong variety of souls.

23. And to me indeed it is sufficient thus to know that the Manichaeans err, that I know that sin must be repented of; and yet if now by right of friendship I should accost some one of my friends who still thinks that they

are worthy of being listened to, and should say to him: Do you not know that it is useful, when any one has sinned, to repent? Without hesitation he will swear that he knows. If then I shall have convinced you that Manichaeism is false, will you not desire anything more? Let him reply what more he can desire in this matter. Very well, so far. But when I shall have begun to show the sure and necessary arguments which, bound to it with adamantine chains, as the saying is, follow that proposition, and shall have conducted to its conclusion the whole process by which that sect is overthrown, he will deny perhaps that he knows the utility of repenting, which no learned man, no unlearned, is ignorant of, and will rather contend, when we hesitate and deliberate, that two souls in us furnish each its own proper help to the solution of the different parts of the question. O habit of sin! O accompanying penalty of sin! Then you turned me away from the consideration of things so manifest, but you injured me when I did not discern. But now, among my most familiar acquaintances who do not discern, you wound and torment me discerning.

## CHAPTER 15

### HE PRAYS FOR HIS FRIENDS WHOM HE HAS HAD AS ASSOCIATES IN ERROR

24. Give heed to these things, I beseech you, dearly beloved. Your dispositions I have well known. If you now concede to me the mind and the reason of any sort of man, these things are far more certain than the things that we seemed to learn or rather were compelled to believe. Great God, God omnipotent, God of supreme goodness, whose right it is to be believed and known to be inviolable and unchangeable. Trinal Unity, whom the Catholic Church worships, as one who have experienced in myself Thy mercy, I supplicate Thee, that Thou wilt not permit those with whom from boyhood I have lived most harmoniously in every relation to dissent from me in Thy worship. I see how it was especially to be expected in this place that I should either even then have defended the Catholic Scriptures attacked by the Manichaeans, if as I say, I had been cautious; or I should now show that they can be defended. But in other volumes God will aid my purpose, for the moderate length of this, as I suppose, already asks to be spared.